

3475⁴/B

MACNEILL, H.
C

JOHN GOODSIR.

HARRY D. S. GOODSIR.

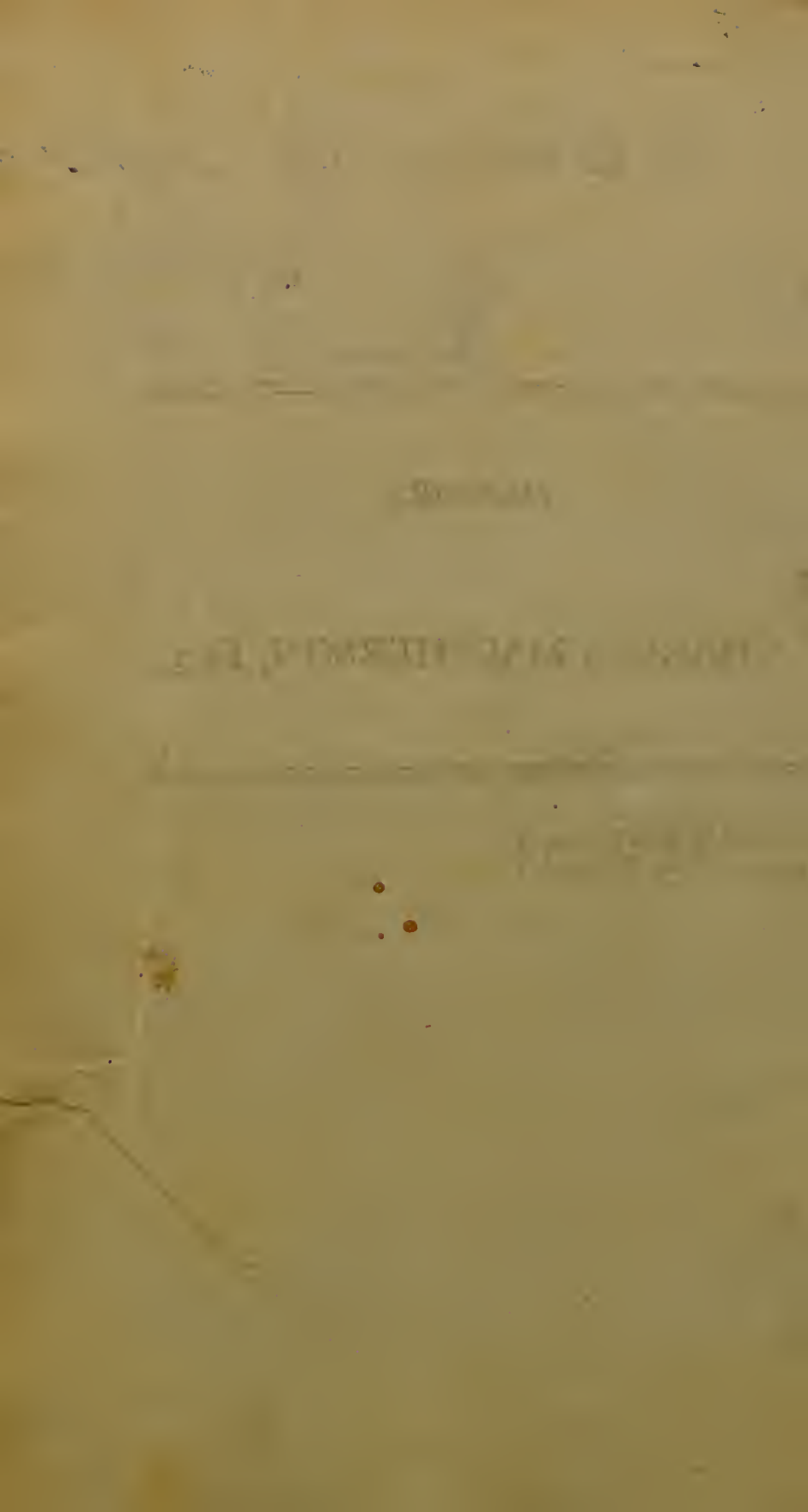
Harry Goodson
of Largo
Rising Sun

MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES MACPHERSON, Esq.

Printed by John Brown, }
Anchor Close, Edinburgh. }



John Goodwin
MEMOIRS *no 243*

OF THE
LIFE AND TRAVELS

OF THE LATE

CHARLES MACPHERSON, Esq.
IN ASIA, AFRICA, AND AMERICA.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND CHARACTER;

WITH A

PARTICULAR INVESTIGATION OF THE NATURE, TREAT-
MENT, AND POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT, OF THE NEGRO
IN THE BRITISH AND FRENCH WEST INDIA ISLANDS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF CHIEFLY BETWEEN THE YEARS
1773 AND 1790.

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.



EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR ARCH. CONSTABLE, AND SOLD IN
LONDON BY VERNOR AND HOOD.

1800.



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE *HENRY DUNDAS*,
TREASURER OF THE NAVY, &c. &c. &c.

WHO HAS SO
EMINENTLY DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF
IN THE
UNITED CAUSE OF
JUSTICE AND HUMANITY:

THE FOLLOWING EXTRACT,
RELATIVE TO THE
STATE AND FUTURE IMPROVEMENT OF
NEGRO BONDAGE

IN THE
BRITISH WEST INDIA COLONIES,
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY,
HIS MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE EDITOR.

P R E F A C E

BY THE

E D I T O R.

THE Memoirs, of which the present Volume is a part, had been in the Editor's possession for several years, unperused, and, indeed, unnoticed ; and, but for an accidental circumstance,

might have remained so much longer. They appear to have been originally written for the Author's amusement, and as a kind of register of past and singular events : for although the object is evidently to convey useful information and moral instruction, through the medium of *anecdote*, *character*, and *story*; the various and repeated emendations in style and language, sufficiently prove that the corrections were all made on the first manuscript. This circumstance alone, which renders the perusal rather a task than an amusement, deterred the Editor from engaging in a laboured research

search after what he conceived was of little consequence to the community; but more especially what would have inevitably withdrawn him from professional duties, which admitted of little recess.

DURING a short vacation in the country, some years ago; the violent and reiterated discussions of the SLAVE TRADE; *and its consequences*, induced the Editor to dip into the observations of one, the principal part of whose life, he well knew, had been spent in our West India Islands. Finding, on a short per-

usal, a fund of intelligence and entertainment he little expected, he was insensibly and agreeably led on to the end : and he hesitates not to say, that in this literary hunt after interesting facts and uncommon vicissitude, he was amply recompensed for his labours. Had the zeal which actuated the advocates for abolition continued, the picture delineated in the History of MADAME BELLANGER would not have been so long withheld from public view ; but as the subject seemed to slumber into neglect, and at length die away, the Editor conceived it an idle attempt to disturb

disturb what had dropt into repose, or to obtrude on a fatiated public a theme which, from its very tendency, would, in all probability, have been disregarded.

THE proposed revival of the *Abolition of the SLAVE TRADE*, which MR PITT has pledged himself to bring before the BRITISH PARLIAMENT during the present Session, has induced the Editor no longer to withhold what, perhaps, has already remained but too long in obscurity. On a question so intimately connected with the interest, the happiness, and, he may add, the satisfaction of mankind; and
in

in the discussion of which, it is but natural to conclude, from the abilities of the mover, much ingenuity will be displayed, and important matter brought forward; the Editor conceives, that nothing relative to a subject of such consequence ought to be concealed. He has therefore, at the expence of some inconvenience, prepared the following specimen of the work before alluded to: in which is contained, a considerable part of the Author's observations on Negro Bondage in the West India Colonies; and which, after all that has already been advanced on the subject, may

may perhaps be found not unworthy of serious consideration.

COULD the Editor flatter himself with the fond hope that this short, though interesting, draught, executed by one who viewed objects minutely on the spot, might ultimately tend to elucidate what over-heated humanity on one side, and over-interested prejudice on the other, have hitherto contributed to obscure;—could he but bring his mind to think, that a plain undisguised statement of opposite facts and opinions might operate so as to

lead

lead contending parties to weigh the nature and importance of each other's arguments without heat or animosity ; —or could he entertain the belief, that *enumerated* RISKS *annexed* to INNOVATION, and PRACTICABLE IMPROVEMENTS *amidst* DISCOURAGING DIFFICULTIES, might incline theorists to pause before they decide, and proprietors to deliberate before they condemn—there would be little occasion for his apologising to the Public for having thus presented them with so scanty a portion of the entertainment from which it is taken, or assigning his motives for

having

having obtruded on the literary world so imperfect a transcript.—Should, however, this specimen meet with encouragement, it is not unlikely that the remainder may shortly follow.

March, 1800.

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES MACPHERSON, Esq.

MY father, though descended from one of the most reputable families in Argyleshire, was, like most of the younger branches in Scotland, early forced to leave home, in search of better prospects abroad. My grandfather had thirteen sons, all grown up to man's estate; and being all remarkable for their stature and comely appearance, my grandmother used often to say, that when she went to church on Sunday, with her thirteen sons around her, she considered herself a greater woman than the Queen of England encircled with her whole court. With all the local con-

A

sequence

sequence annexed to ancestry and property in the Highlands, my grandfather was a man of too much prudence to keep his sons in idle inactivity at home, when conscious of his inability to make a suitable provision for them; and, as trade and visiting distant climes were in those days less frequent than at present, the most eligible line that presented itself for procuring honourable bread for his children, was the army. He therefore, conformable to ancient custom, reserved his estate entire for his eldest son, and giving the rest a genteel education, reserved £100 patrimony for each; which, at the period alluded to, was considered amply sufficient to fix them in the profession of a soldier.

AT the age of seventeen, my father, full of youthful ardour, possessed of an uncommon elegance of form, and a most engaging aspect, left the hospitality of his paternal home, and repaired to London for the purpose of entering into the Guards, or, as they were called in those

those days, the *King's Life Guards*. Here he soon became acquainted with Colonel F——'s daughter, at that time a girl of about sixteen in a boarding school; and, hurried on by a mutual affection, they, without loss of time, or considering future consequences, took one another for better and for worse, leaving Providence to do the rest.

LONDON was a most unfavourable place for a young inexperienced couple, without fortune, prudence, or economy; and my father soon found, when it was too late, that a wife in his situation was a very serious appendage. He therefore determined, on her becoming pregnant, to carry her down to Argyleshire, not only to preclude expences, but to introduce her to his relations, and have her carefully attended to during her lying-in. On this visit he became known to the Duchess Dowager of Argyle; and, notwithstanding the existence of a law-suit at this time between her Grace and my grandfather, so great a favourite

vourite was my father, that, on his departure for London, she gave him a letter to her son Archibald, then Lord Ilay, couched in such warm terms, as to procure him his Lordship's immediate patronage. From this time he possessed not only Lord Ilay's favour, but his affection. His Lordship's house was at all times his home; and wherever he went (except on visits of particular ceremony) he used to take his mother's favourite along with him. This was a real advantage to a young man just commencing his career in life; for, exclusive of every other benefit derived from his Lordship's friendship, my father had always an opportunity of seeing and conversing with the first company in Britain. It had, however, no other effect than to make him more polite; for his Lordship used often to remark, that his young friend was not only the handsomest, but the most modest Highlander he ever knew. In a short time Lord Ilay procured for my father an appointment in the Customs in Scotland, which induced him to quit the Guards:
and

and not long after, an office of much greater emolument was, through his patron's interest, conferred on him by Sir Robert Walpole; to whom, on his appointment, he was likewise introduced. Had my father been qualified for calculation and accounts, he might have, ere long, to use his own words, rolled in his chariot; but having received a classical, rather than an useful education, he found himself so incompetent to the task, that, in a very short while after his appointment, he intreated permission to resign, and once more, through his patron's interest, became a soldier.

I HAVE thus briefly enumerated the preliminary parts of my father's history, as they tend not only to explain some peculiarities, in his opinion, relative to education, but to illustrate a trite observation, that while some, with every exertion and talent to insure success, are uniformly unfortunate; others, without trouble, and with ordinary abilities, will be successful in whatever they engage. My
A 3 father's.

father's good fortune, however, was not permanent. Having served some campaigns in Germany, he was seized with an imposthume on the liver, which obliged him to return home for the benefit of his health; and obtaining leave to sell out, he imprudently, though innocently, disposed of his company, without having previously consulted his patron, at this time Duke of Argyle. This seeming neglect operated so powerfully on his Grace, that he immediately withdrew a friendship, which was never afterwards regained: a pretty evident proof of his regard; since we generally find, that the resentment of slighted friendship is in proportion to the strength of the affection.

HAVING therefore nothing to trust to but the money arising from the sale of his commission, my father, who by this time was turned of forty, and had married a second wife, by whom he had three children, retired to the country; and taking a small farm for his amusement, on a rational and economical plan, supported the
character

character of a gentleman, in a style and manner which, considering the smallness of his income, was altogether extraordinary.

FOR several years, my father, blessed in the possession of the best of wives, and children who disgraced not his instructions, enjoyed the calm tranquillity of a country life, with a comfort to himself, and in a style that not only attracted the notice, but procured him the particular attention of his most opulent neighbours. These peaceful scenes, however, continued not long; a train of unfortunate events, proceeding from the most benevolent motives, soon broke this happy serenity, shook my father's whole fortitude to the centre, and ruined my mother's peace of mind for ever!

THERE are few circumstances in human affairs that gall and corrode a generous mind more sensibly than disappointments in friendship. Ingratitude from those whom we had placed next our hearts, is a shock which stupifies and confounds;

found; for, independent of every other mortification, it produces a train of unpleasant reflections on our own want of discernment, in being made the dupe of artifice and deceit; which seldom or never fails to rankle and distress. My poor father was little qualified for encountering the chicanery of the world. An unbounded philanthropy, and a heart that knew no luxury equal to a benevolent and friendly action, laid him constantly open to the designing arts of mankind; and, without guile himself, seldom or never suspected the sincerity of others. Unfortunately, some of his intimate acquaintance were men of desperate fortunes, who held their heads high at the time they were sinking. My father thought not of risk, nor concerned himself about the real state of their circumstances, when one asked him to be surety for a large debt, and the other for the loan of a considerable sum. "*With the greatest pleasure,*" was my father's answer; and, in an evil hour, by these two acts did he subject himself to the payment of a debt for a bankrupt,

rupt, and to the mortification of never recovering, in a fifteen years law-suit, what he lent to a hair-brained and unprincipled projector !

IN spite of every prudent and economical plan, and the exertions of a notable woman, who turned every thing to the best account, my father saw himself, and his family, exposed to the horrors of want. Born and educated a gentleman, he found himself, at the age of fifty, stripped by villains of the principal part of his substance, without the means of procuring bread for his family, far less to provide for those who were dearer to him than life. In this distressing emergency, an opportunity having offered for my brother's getting out to Jamaica in quality of clerk to a counting-house, he was launched from his paternal home, never to return ; and a wealthy relation of my father's in Bristol, happening about the same time to pay us a visit, took such a predilection for me, that he made an offer to provide for me as soon as my age, and some necessary parts of education, would

would permit : a propofal which, every thing confidered, was too advantageous to be rejected.

AT this time I was fcarcely nine years old, and of all my father's children was the greateft favourite. This *he* endeavoured to conceal by every art he was mafter of ; for he held it as an unpardonable weaknefs in parents to make any diftinctions in their children, or to fhew any other preference, than what merit and worthlefsnefs authorifed. As for my mother, fhe was lefs guarded ; and grounding her preference on my being the youngeft, the beft looked, and the moft engaging, fhe would indulge herfelf in all thofe little donations, and maternal endearments, that marked a ftrong and partial affection. The fondnefs of parents naturally leads them to magnify every little acquirement of their children to fome extraordinary excellence. The bafis of this is felf-love, which, contemplating every thing pertaining to ourfelves through the thick medi-

um of partiality, passes lightly over blemishes which tend to disfigure the picture; while it delights to gaze on whatever is prominently striking, or luminously bright. With certain natural endowments, which bespoke genius, and with acquirements which, perhaps, were unusual at so early a period, I was pronounced a *most wonderful boy*! At the age of eight, I could write five different characters in no contemptible style; could, without having received any instruction, and with nothing but pen and ink, imitate ingeniously any thing I found delineated on paper or canvass; was an apt scholar in every branch of education I had tried; and discovered so early a propensity to poetry, that, by the age of eleven, I had not only written several occasional *jeu d'esprits*, but attempted a dramatic performance in verse, in imitation of Gay's *Dione*. These were accompanied with dispositions, which, if not perfect or uncommon, were at least engaging in the eye of a parent. To a modesty and sensibility, even to excess, I possessed no inconsiderable

rable

table fund of humour and vivacity ; and what, perhaps, marks the character more strongly, with the utmost gentleness and tenderness of heart, I possessed passions the most ardent, and a mind bold, haughty, and undaunted, when treated with disrespect. But of all the passions that operated, love was the most powerful ; and I remember well, that, at an age when I could scarcely know how to express my ideas, I used to single out my favourite from among the throng, and, by the most artful endearments and persuasions, draw her from public view, and pour out my little heart to her in secret. In one of these interviews, my mother, who had often marked the peculiarity of my conduct, contrived to be a witness, and was altogether confounded at the tenderness of my sentiments and the ardour of my declarations. In the midst of this rapturous scene of infantine passion, and while I held my fair one's hand in mine, and declared that it was not for her superior beauty alone, but for her gentleness and goodness, that I preferred her to all the other

other girls in the neighbourhood, did I perceive my mother peeping over the hedge, gazing with astonishment, and smiling with delight. My confusion was so great, that I not only blushed excessively, but burst into tears. I remember likewise that my little partner (who was much of the same age), instead of experiencing similar emotions on observing my mother, came up to me, with surprise in her countenance, and asked, What was the matter with me? My mother, who knew human nature well, shook her head, and said, " My dear Charles! you have more sensibility than comes to your share, and your sweetheart has too little." This short characteristical sketch, as a general key to the various events in the following narrative of a chequered life, the writer need make no apology for.

Some time after my brother's departure, my father obtained, through the interest of his friends in England, a small pension of £40 *per annum*. This was a seasonable relief; and on

B

this

this and his farm did he keep up his usual consequence, and preserve that genteel and officer-like appearance which had formerly so conspicuously distinguished him. My brother's removal indeed was some saving in his annual expences; and having now only my sister and me to attend to, his chief study was to give me an education suited to the prospects I had before me. He had himself early and often experienced the disadvantages of a mere classical education, and the want of an useful one; and as he had no patrimony to bestow, and in all likelihood my cousin in Bristol would place me in some mercantile branch of business, he determined to make me a master of figures rather than a master of arts; which, joined to the penmanship I possessed, he conceived the best tools he could put into my hands to procure bread, and ensure future independence. Till the age of twelve, he had himself carefully superintended those parts of early education immediately connected with morals; nor had he neglected to instil those
important

important precepts drawn from actual observation and the history of mankind, which, from his reading and experience of the world, he was eminently qualified to inculcate. If ever a good or a gentleman-like sentiment occupied the breast of the present writer, he may safely say, that it was principally owing to the unwearied instruction and uniform example of a parent, who paid an unremitting attention to the morals and manners of his children. So extremely tenacious was he of every principle of honour, that the smallest deviation from *truth* gave him not only uneasiness but real pain; and so successful was he in his endeavours to implant this grand regulator of moral rectitude in the youthful mind, that, at the early age of five, if he put a question to me, enjoining me at the same time to declare the truth *upon my honour*, no consideration whatever could induce me to deviate from it in the most minute particular. I remember well a circumstance, which, although trifling, and perhaps childish, may however serve to mark

the importance of precept, and illustrate the force of unremitting instruction at an early period. My brother and I lay together in the same bed ; and one night having offended me just as I was about to lie down, I declared, in the heat of passion, that I would not sleep with him that night ; rashly confirming my declaration by the most solemn of all vows—upon my honour. My brother, who was ten years older than me, endeavoured, by every art he was master of, to induce me to go to bed, but to no purpose ; and I actually lay a complete cold winter night on a chest in the room, rather than (to use my father's favourite phrase) “*forfeit my honour.*” On my brother's relating the circumstance next morning, my father, I likewise remember, caught me in his arms, and caressing me with eyes swimming in rapture, called me his dear, his *honourable* boy, who should never want for any thing.

AT the period above alluded to, I was put to a country school, for the purpose of acquiring

ing a thorough knowledge of arithmetic and book-keeping. In a short time after, my master waited on my father with high encomiums on the quickness of my progress and the goodness of my talents; and, after an eulogium on classical learning, earnestly requested him to encourage such promising talents, by giving me, what he called, *the more dignified parts of education*. By this he meant a knowledge of the Latin language; of which he was an enthusiastic admirer, and indeed no contemptible teacher. As this conversation passed in my presence, and contained some curious arguments for and against classical education, I shall candidly narrate what was advanced on either side, which, from the impressions made on my mind at the time, have never since been obliterated.

“WELL! Mr Balfour (said my father), admitting I yielded to your request, what are the mighty advantages annexed to a knowledge of the Latin language?”—“I presume, Captain

B 3

(said

(said Mr Balfour), that to you who have received a regular university education, these advantages need not be specified."—"They certainly do (said my father); for as I have experienced the disadvantages, I should be glad to hear what can be advanced in its favour."—"You are disposed to be jocular, Captain (said the other). A gentleman of your good sense and acquirements cannot be serious in maintaining any such paradox, or laying down any such *postulatum*."—"Never more so in my life, I do assure you (resumed my father). I mean not to deny the propriety of classical education in certain situations; I only deny the necessity of it to such as can never derive benefit from its attainment."—"There is no such description of men existing (said Mr Balfour). *Every mortal* must derive benefit from a classical education! *Qui ad philosophorum scholas, veniunt quotide aliquid boni referrent**."—"That

is

* Those who repair to the school of the philosophers always carry home some advantage. *Seneca, Ep. 35.*

is rather a singular *postulatum* on your side, Mr Balfour (said my father). What advantage, for instance, can a tailor or a shoemaker derive from it? Do you conceive that a Latin pair of boots, or a Greek pair of breeches, would fit better than plain English ones?"—"Neither would they fit a bit the worse" (rejoined Mr Balfour).—"I am not so clear about that" (said my father).—"But your son is neither to be a tailor nor a shoemaker, I presume, Captain."—"Neither is he to be a physician, a divine, a lawyer, or a doctor of laws (said my father). He has no inheritance to raise him to consequence in the state, no landed property to entitle him to a seat in parliament. Fortune has not enabled his father to make him bask in her smiles; he must therefore be a suitor of Fortune, and bustle and fight his way through life by his own industry and usefulness; and the sooner that these are brought into action the better."—"And do you conceive (said Mr Balfour) that a little *Latin* would impede his progress, or retard the advance-

advancement of his fortune?"—"I certainly do (said my father). A *little* Latin, of all drugs, is the most useless and pernicious that can possibly be infused in a young man's education. If I cannot afford to make my son a complete scholar, I am determined he shall not taste the Pierian spring at all. He shall be no smatterer, but complete in *some* acquirement: and were this system more generally adopted in Scotland, I cannot help thinking it would evince us a much more judicious people. But while English boys of certain descriptions are, at an early period, instructed in useful attainments, and qualified to prosecute beneficial professions, every low and ridiculous block-head in this country must, forsooth, give his son what he calls *learn*; which, after five or six years unprofitably spent at a grammar school, is generally of no more service to his future advancement than if he had learned *Erse*."—"And yet, Captain (said Mr Balfour vauntingly), our Scotch boys get on in life full as well as the English, I presume."—"Out of their

their own country, they unquestionably do (said my father); but not in consequence of their *leer*, Mr Balfour.”—“ And pray, Sir, may I presume to ask what is it then ? ”—“ It is in consequence of their superior *temperance* (said my father); superior *patience* under trying circumstances; superior *fidelity* in their trust; and unremitting *attention* in their duty.”—“ And what can this possibly proceed from (said Mr Balfour exultingly) but their acquaintance with those illustrious characters of antiquity, whose godlike sentiments and conduct furnish such noble examples for imitation? What can produce impressions of temperance, patience, and content, superior to a CINCINNATUS? What convey to a youthful mind lessons of true fortitude, magnanimity, and inflexible fidelity, more effectually than the uniform steadiness of those immortal men who, in the very acmé of danger, and amidst the overwhelming crash of ruin and human calamity, persevered in their duty to their country; and so often, by mere dint of intrepidity,

saved

saved the republic when tottering on the verge
 of destruction? Where, in modern times,
 shall we find a MILTIADES—a LEONIDAS—
 a PERICLES—a THEMISTOCLES—an EPA-
 MINONDAS? Where a MUTIUS SCAEVOLA
 —a BRUTUS—a VIRGINIUS—a CAMILLUS
 —a FABIUS—a SCIPIO AFRICANUS? No
 wonder, Captain, that our young men point
instinctively to the army. The story of the
 HORATII and CURIATII alone is sufficient
 to make a warrior! No wonder they make so
 respectable a figure in their military career,
 when such examples, as the Greek and Roman
 histories furnish, are daily held up to them in
 their youth, implanted in their tender minds,
 and, in a manner, incorporated with their na-
 tures! And will any person contend, that this
 has no influence on future conduct? or that
 sentiments so elevated, and actions so disin-
 terestedly splendid, are not more likely to re-
 flect superior lustre, than the groveling pur-
 suits of the plebeian soul immersed in ~~Siberian~~ *clim*
 darkness, whose utmost ambition centres in
 the

the possession of a good dinner, or the beastly gratification of a sensual debauch? Pueri legant (says Quintilian) et ediscant non modo quæ jucunda sunt sed magis quæ honesta *. Will it be denied, that the Roman classics contain a variety of useful and intellectual maxims for the conduct of life? or will it be maintained, that these maxims have no utility in the regulation of manners and practice? Will it not be allowed, that the example of the Roman heroes have a natural tendency to inspire courage; to animate with patriotism; to elevate the mind above sordid and ungenerous pursuits; to infuse a sense of honour and dignity into the whole man; and, what is of the last importance in every walk of human life, to expand the intellectual faculties, and communicate health, energy, and vigour, to *the mind*?

Doctrina sed vim premovent insitam

Rectique cultus pectora roborant†.

Yes,

* Let children learn, not only what is pleasant, but much more what is virtuous and honest.

† But learning improves innate abilities; and proper instructions strengthen the mind. *Her.*

Yes, yes! depend upon it, Captain, that the success of our countrymen is chiefly, if not wholly, owing to their early acquaintance with the Roman classics"—“I am sorry (said my father, smiling at Mr Balfour’s enthusiasm) that I cannot, consistent with my experience, pay the Romans so high a compliment; because the men to whom I allude knew no more of the Roman classics than I do of the Gentoo laws. Their education amounts to very simple acquisitions, Mr Balfour; many of them can hardly subscribe their own names, and I’ll be sworn never read any other classics than their Bible and their *catechism* in their lives. Their success, however, was certainly owing to an early education, but not such as *you* recommend;—it was very different indeed!”—“Pray, Sir (said Mr Balfour eagerly), what was it?”—“It was the superior education of early *restraint* to early *indulgence* (said my father); of *rigid economy* to *extravagance*; of habitual *temperance* to habitual *pleasure*; of examples of prudence and religion to folly, dissoluteness, and

and vice.—“ Do you comprehend me, Mr Balfour ” (said my father).—“ I am rather at a loss for your *postulatum*, Captain ” (said Mr Balfour).—“ I shall explain myself more fully ” (said my father).

“ EARLY IMPRESSIONS, as you very judiciously observe, Mr Balfour, have a very powerful effect on future conduct : habits long established have still a greater. It is therefore of infinite importance, not only to future success, but to future happiness, that our children be educated so as to enable them to encounter the inevitable vicissitudes of life with firmness and fortitude ; and what is perhaps still more essential to human comfort, to *feel* the inconveniences annexed to an unfavourable change of situation as little as possible. He who wishes to leave his son an inheritance of felicity, ought studiously to lay up for him, as soon as he can, such a stock of *restraints* and refusals as may, in due time, yield a seasonable and plenteous increase. Indulgence, in the early part of life,

C

is

is the sure source of future necessities; and an habitual gratification of what are called *the good things of this world*, the heaviest and most grievous tax that can possibly be laid on future tranquillity. An English and a Scotch boy's education, in this particular instance, is so very different, that I cannot help considering it as the chief cause of those distinctions which mark their conduct in similar situations, particularly in that of our fleets and armies. Those distinctions originate, not from any radical difference in the genius or abilities of the two people; but from circumstances as natural as they are common—circumstances which have ever attended, and ever must accompany, the wealth and prosperity of nations. Luxury, we all know, is the immediate concomitant of wealth; and dissoluteness of luxury. While these spread their influence among the opulent and gay, the contagion must be felt in some degree by all. The love of pleasure is congenial to the human mind; and when we look around, and perceive tempting incentives to indulge, and example
to

to incite; can it be wondered at, if we wish to participate? and after participation, can it be wondered at, if we persevere in what yields superior satisfaction? Now, in England, the article of *good living*, or, to make myself more perfectly understood, the article of *good eating*, from the causes just specified, has become so essential to an Englishman's happiness, that it may, without any paradox, be said to constitute his greatest curse."—"Aye! (said Mr Balfour) that is something extraordinary indeed!"—"Without it (continued my father) he is miserable in every situation; and to obtain it, he will often sacrifice the most important and prudential concerns—It is the god of his daily idolatry—the object of his invariable attention—the sovereign soother of his sufferings—the perpetual theme of his praise! Were this all, we might pass it over with a smile; but, unfortunately, this is the best side of the picture, and the reverse presents us with something so degrading to human nature, and so subversive of human happiness, as to excite a mixture of

melancholy, pity, and contempt—I hope and *think* (said my father emphatically), that I am altogether above national prejudice—I have associated longer with the English than with any other description of men whatever; and it is doing no more than common justice to my sentiments to declare, that, take them all in all, I love and venerate them the most. But still (said my father, shaking his head) this vile and violent attachment to their bellies, is what I ever did, and ever must condemn; because I have so repeatedly witnessed the unhappy consequences inseparable from it. Their raptures over a feast may excite ridicule; but their miserable murmurs over every thing that comes not exactly up to their palates; their spendthrift folly in procuring whatever they admire; and their childish despondency on a privation of a few temporary trifles—excite very different sensations; because we well know that they too often are the source, not only of irregularity of conduct, but of those dismal catastrophes which terminate by a pistol, the serpentine river,

ver, or Tyburn tree. Amidst this system of general gormandizing—this vortex of cramming—this avidity for every thing *good* and *nice* and *rare* in eating; what are the *impressions* which a young mind must necessarily receive in the early part of education? Does not a boy perceive, from the hour of his birth, every individual around him eagerly pressing forward to a feast, or grumbling and repining over humble fare? Are not his ears perpetually regaled with culinary criticisms, and his appetite incessantly whetted with descriptions of sumptuous repasts? Is he not initiated from his cradle into the arcana of cookery? Is he not, long before the age of maturity, an experienced and profound connoisseur in every branch of the art?

ON the other hand, what are the daily objects that strike a boy educated in Scotland? (Remember, said my father, that, in this comparative view, I allude to the inferior class of inhabitants in either country): Nursed in the lap of *Economy*, he sees father, mother, friends, and acquaintance, looking forward, not to im-

mediate enjoyments, but to future prospects. He observes few preparations for the feast, but every preparation for the holiday, the kirk, and the fair. In other words, he sees the belly constantly pinched, for the purpose of accumulating something for the back; and that a decent appearance is an object of much more attention, to both young and old, than all the gluttony of a MAXIMUS, or the luxury of a HELIOGABALUS. Now (continued my father), what are the inevitable *consequences* of these different impressions on the removal of a young man from his paternal home, and in particular from his native country? In the one case, in all likelihood, one boy finds a change in every thing for the worse; in the other, he experiences a change for the better. At all events, should the day of Pentecost arrive, we may safely conclude, that the Englishman's sufferings will be the most acute of the two; and indeed, in every situation where short commons, or hard fare, visit our soldiers or our seamen, the truth of this conclusion is but too apparent.

Not

Nor can it be wondered at. He must be a philosopher indeed, who, after having tasted the pleasures of sensual gratification, can temperate his appetite to the hard necessity of the times without murmuring. The mind, once accustomed to habitual enjoyment, must often recur to the circumstance which produced it, and as often wish for a renewal of what formerly afforded pleasure. This retrospect of the *past*, and *pisgah view* of the future, must operate powerfully in withdrawing steady, patient, and cheerful attention from the *present*; and it is to this cause, and to no other, that I attribute the whole of that difference which, unquestionably, marks the conduct of our English and Scotch soldiers, sailors, and, I may add, mechanics; and which often renders one description of men, even with inferior abilities and activity, objects of superior trust."

"And yet, Captain (said Mr Balfour), you seem to prefer this mode of *eating* education to that of our own."—"I prefer (said my father) an education

tion

tion which brings young men, who have nothing but their industry to depend upon, early into useful employment, to that which tends to retard their progress, without giving one single advantage in return. But while I prefer what contributes to the advancement of general industry, it does not follow, Mr Balfour, that I approve of maladies that impede its full effect. These maladies I have just specified and condemned; and as they certainly do not originate from *learning*, it rests with you to prove (said my father smiling), that an acquaintance with the *Roman Classics* would effectuate a cure.”—“It likewise rests with you, Captain, to prove that it would *not* (said Mr Balfour); and that the prevailing education in our own country is not the secret, though silent cause, of that humble temperance, prudence, and economy, which characterise the lower classes of society in Scotland, and which afterwards contribute to their future success.”—“If by education, you mean Latin and Greek (said my father), I have proved that already.”—“As how?” (said Mr Balfour)
—“By

—“ By shewing (said my father), that those who do succeed, and excel by their good conduct, know no more of either than my dog *Borran*.”—“ But you have forgot to prove, Captain, that those who *do*, act less meritoriously.”

—“ Admitting (said my father) that they do not, is *loss of time* no consideration? Is it not absurd to waste five or six years of the most valuable period in life, in acquiring nothing towards future success? and cannot this important period be employed to better purposes?”

—“ I do not think it can (said Mr Balfour briskly). What can a boy learn from the age of eight to fourteen? ”—“ *Any thing* better (said my father) than that which for years he cannot comprehend: but it would be no difficult matter to prove that, in the period just mentioned, much and material instruction may be attained. The question, Mr Balfour, may be reduced to a very narrow compass—it turns on this simple point, *What is the education the most likely to procure a young man of no fortune or expectation, early employment—contribute to preferment—and secure*

an eligible establishment in life? For the accomplishment of these desirable ends—What are the *tools which he must work with?*—*What are the talents most generally in request?* Is it the knowledge of a dead language, for which, in all probability, he never afterwards will find the smallest occasion? or is it the knowledge of what, in a great trading opulent nation, is continually in demand? Is it an acquaintance with ancient republics, statesmen, and heroes? or with the arts, commerce, and manufactures of the country in which he resides? Is it nouns, verbs, and participles? or figures, penmanship, and accounts? Is it, in short, the sentiments of a Roman? or the sentiments of a man of business?”—“And what prevents all this from being attained together with a knowledge of Latin” (said Mr Balfour).—“*Want of time! want of time!* (exclaimed my father). The grand and principal object is, to get our sons as early instructed as possible, not only to ease poor parents of a heavy charge, but to enable them to seize the golden opportunity of following

lowing any useful profession with advantage. Remember, Mr Balfour, what our friend Horace says,

Cum tibi sunt nati nec opes tunc artibus illos

Instrue quo possint inopem defendere vitam.* &

To postpone or to trifle with this period, is madness or folly in the extreme! A young man, after a certain time of life, begins to judge for himself, and acts accordingly. His mind takes particular bents, which the partiality of parents mistakes for the operations of genius. He will, in consequence of slight and transient impressions, do this, or that, or nothing. Passions and predilections spring up; a love of pleasure and amusement commences; dispositions, founded on vanity or airy imagination, take root; habits are formed, till, unable to stoop to laborious operations with ease, or prosecute useful professions with perseverance, he

remains

* When you have children and not wealth, then furnish them with trades that they may be able to support an indigent life.

remains loitering in a state of wavering inactivity or idle expectation, a burden to his friends, and useless to the community; when, by an early launch into the world, he might have established himself in the line of emolument, and risen to respect and eminence among his fellow citizens."

+ "AND, pray, what may the be period for this said *launch*, Captain" (said Mr Balfour)?—"Fifteen, or sixteen at farthest (said my father). By that time, and with proper instruction, a young man may face the world without a blush for his ignorance, and be enabled to prosecute any useful profession to advantage."—"And what, in the name of heaven (said Mr Balfour), can be the important branches of education which, exclusive of the dead languages, are to occupy all this time, and qualify the son of a gentleman for such multifarious undertakings?"—"I will briefly enumerate them (said my father, touching his left thumb with his right fore-finger, and striking it repeatedly at each enumeration);

tion); I will briefly enumerate them, Mr Balfour, and leave you to decide as to their utility.

IN the first place, a particular attention to *penmanship, figures, and accounts*, I hold to be indispensibly necessary; because with such materials a young man may enter into any profession (the learned excepted) with advantage; and without them, into none. They are the current coin of every civilized country; but in this, and every great commercial state, they are the springs which set the whole machinery in motion. By these, I mean not the mere instruction obtained at school; but that which is acquired by practical experience in a counting-house, and which, at an early period, may qualify him for a man of business, whatever the nature of that business may be. In the second place, I am for a thorough knowledge of *geography*; for the attainment of which, and, at the same time, to impress memorable historical events on the mind, I would have geo-

D

graphy

graphy and history to go hand in hand, and assist one another. All boys are fond of *drawing* ; and few parents attend to the advantages that may be derived from this elegant and delightful art. Exclusive of the pleasure it conveys to an ingenious mind, it often opens a door to preferment, emolument, and respect. The philosopher, the naturalist, the man of science, and the man of taste, all own and admire its influence, and must venerate the cause which produces such funds of pleasure and information. It is, moreover, one of the best feathers in a *soldier's* cap ; and, independently of every advantage to the traveller and circumnavigator, it is of itself, as a professional art, perhaps the most delightful and profitable, collectively, of any existing. But, like all the other fine arts (said my father), drawing has its fascinating charms to lead its votaries astray, and should therefore be guarded against, and restrained within due limits. *Mathematics* I certainly would not leave out, nor the study of *natural philosophy*.—Exclusively of their assistance

sistance in prosecuting many of the useful arts to advantage, they accustom the youthful mind to reason justly and acutely; but I am not for extending the study of those branches, particularly the first, too far. The first six books of Euclid, with *trigonometry*, and a competent knowledge of *geometry*, I should think a sufficient foundation for future prosecution, if necessary. These, together with the elements of *navigation*, and the usual accompaniments of what distinguishes a genteel education, among which I unquestionably would not exclude a knowledge of the *French language*, I call the *essential* parts of a young man's education; and possessed of these, I am persuaded he is fully qualified to brush through life, not only with success, but with respectability; and at all times prepared to catch at any of the useful professions which opportunity may throw in his way."—"But, *good God!* Captain (exclaimed Mr Balfour, rendered almost frantic with this total exclusion of ancient literature), what are all these *essentials*, as you call them, to a young

man who, either by birth, connections, or abilities, is intitled to fill offices which lead to honour and distinction; and which, in a particular manner, demand some of the *higher branches* of education to render him, in those departments, dignified or respectable? How can any man, who aspires to a station above the mere vulgar, put pen to paper, or open his lips in company, without a knowledge of composition, which nothing but an acquaintance with the *classics* can give; without a correctness in language, which nothing but a knowledge of *grammar* can produce? What a figure, for instance, would any *military* man, above the rank of a serjeant, make in conversation, were he unacquainted with the history of those heroes of antiquity, who ought to be the invariable patterns of his conduct? And, in talking of their memorable operations, or in transmitting an account of his own, how contemptible would he appear, in the opinion of his fellow officers, friends, and acquaintance, were he unable to express himself, like a soldier

dier and a gentleman, and be forced to make use of the phraseology of a porter, or a composition that would disgrace his washerwoman? Ut ager quamvis fertilis sine cultura fructum, idea non potest sic sine doct̃rina animus*. But to put rank, and the station of a gentleman, altogether out of the question, and to view mankind simply in the light of citizens emerging, by the efforts of industry, from penury to wealth, and, by a laudable ambition, rising from obscurity to consequence and power, let me ask you, Captain, if the possession of literary talents are not some of the highest steps of the ladder by which they ascend, and, after mounting to the top, some of the brightest ornaments they can possess? Is not an illiterate man an object of contempt, however elevated his station? Interrogatus Aristippus (says Cicero), quod discrimen esset inter *doctos* et *indoctos*? respondit, idem quod inter equos *domitos*

D 3

et

* As land, though fertile, cannot bring forth fruit without cultivation, so neither can the mind.

et non domitos*. And is not the scholar looked up to with respect even in the bosom of poverty?—is not the gentleman venerated and respected in proportion to the knowledge and erudition he has obtained? What renders Captain Macpherson, at this moment, even with a slender fortune, so superior to all the men of landed property round him, but the superior company with which he has associated, and the superior education which he has received. Videmus literas et ingenuas artes, non solum beatæ vitæ oblectationem, sed etiam levamen maximum †. And will *you*, Sir, who experience such advantages and consolations from a liberal education, exclude your son from similar enjoyments; and with talents so promising, bury every budding blossom of genius in the charnel of mean vulgarity, and obscure every

* Aristippus being asked, what difference there is between the learned and unlearned? replied, the same that is between horses that are broken and those that are not broken.

† We see that learning and the polite arts are not only the entertainment of a happy life, but likewise its relief.

every luminous ray of fancy in the dark tomb of oblivion ! I cannot bear the idea (said Mr Balfour, rising hastily from his seat, and walking as hastily across the room)—I cannot bear the idea!—upon my soul I cannot!”

“I WAS proceeding (said my father with great coolness) to a consideration of this very important and necessary branch of education, and, of course, am not altogether unprepared for your question, Mr Balfour. A correct knowledge of our own language, I am so far from excluding from my system, that I hold it of the utmost consequence. Every young man, whatever his station in life may be, must derive advantages from it; and without it, every man who aspires to the rank of a gentleman, must, in the opinion of the world, suffer degradation. It is a thorough conviction of this truth, founded on repeated experience, that has induced me, among other considerations, to condemn the general system of education adopted in this country; for so far am I from agreeing

agreeing with you in the idea that Latin is *indispensible* for the attainment of good English composition, I am, on the contrary, clearly of opinion, that, in the *limited time* which I have allotted for scholastic instruction, it is the great impediment. (Mr Balfour held up his hands and groaned.) In *one* month (continued my father) I will engage to make a boy comprehend more of the grammatical construction of his own language than WATT or RUDDIMAN will do in *twelve*; and in one tenth part of the time consumed in acquiring the common principles of an unknown tongue, I will, by the help of English grammar, the perusal of good English authors, elegant translations, and frequent practice in English composition, give him a more easy, accurate, and polished style, than all that TACITUS, TITUS LIVIUS, or TULLIUS CICERO, can produce. And why? Because in the time one boy is getting unknown vocables by rote, the other is applying familiar words grammatically to familiar uses. Because, while the one is hammering his brains

to

to find out rules for purposes which he does not comprehend, the other is advancing rapidly and pleasantly in tasks where instruction is exemplified by productions of taste, and daily strengthened by works of his own creation. Because, in the frequent perusal of approved English authors, the ear is not only more accustomed to an English idiom, but more familiarized to a good style, and much less liable to be vitiated by a bad one, than in a common grammar school, where the utmost perfection of *English composition* consists in hasty literal translations; and where the criterion of *taste* centres in one man, often as deficient in this grand requisite, as in every other that constitutes elegance and purity in writing. Because, from the difference of idiom in the English and Latin language, a vernacular knowledge of the one cannot be acquired by a study of the other: as a proof of which I do maintain, that before we can attain a correctness in English composition, we are under the necessity of unlearning a great deal of what, with infinite labour

bour and difficulty, we formerly acquired. But what I hold as one of the most important considerations annexed to an *early* application to *English grammar and English composition* is, that having passed through youth without it, we seldom or never apply ourselves to it after. Were we to examine the general run of young men who have escaped the trammels of Greek and Latin, and who often plume themselves on what is called an *academical education*, the truth of this observation would be too evident. Nay, should we analyse the style even of some of those authors who look down on the mere English scholar with sovereign contempt, we shall find, that with much erudition there is often much want of elegance; and that, amidst true genius and science, there are not only embarrassment in the construction, but confusion in the arrangement of their own vernacular idiom.

“ Now, with all due deference to the Latin language and *some* of its teachers (continued my father,

father, bowing respectfully to Mr Balfour), do you conceive that a lad of tolerable parts, and with the education I have specified, is unqualified to fill any department with respectability to himself, and credit to the office he holds? Nay, do you not really think that he will acquit himself just as well in every thing relative to the man of business and the gentleman, as if he had been some years conjugating Latin verbs at a grammar school?"—"I *do not*" (said Mr Balfour rather tartly).—"I will, however, lay ten to one (said my father) that at the age of sixteen, my Englishman will outstrip your Roman in every useful profession they are put to; and if, with equal advantages, he does not approach the goal of preferment some years sooner, I will engage to eat for my dinner all the ancient authors, which, no doubt, in the course of this disquisition you think I have grossly blasphemed."—"You had much better exclude the ancient authors and ancient learning altogether (said Mr Balfour peevishly); for, according to your system, they appear

to

to be totally useless.”—“ Pardon me (said my father), I should be loth indeed to advance any such doctrine. My system, recollect Mr Balfour, has nothing to do with the *learned professions*. It applies solely to a numerous and respectable description of men, whose situations in life demand *exertion*, and whose pursuits *admit not of delay*. But to those whom FORTUNE and LEISURE enable to prosecute the bent of their inclinations, or to such whose time is devoted to the pursuits of polite literature and the sciences, I am for opening a large field, not only for the exercise of talents, but the full gratification of taste. To exclude such from a study of the ancients, would, of all other plans, be the most preposterous and unjust. No source which conveys rational and intellectual pleasure ought to be impeded; and, perhaps, no source is better calculated to convey information and delight to an elegant and comprehensive mind, than the perusal of works which have ever been, and ever will be, admired while good taste and manly reasoning continue

tinue to exist. Whatever I have advanced in support of *useful* and *general* education, let it not be inferred that I am, or ever was, unfriendly to the ancient classics : They have been the favourite ‘ companions of my youth ;’ and, if I mistake not, they will be the ‘ friends of my old age.’ In the midst of trials they have borne me up, and armed me with fortitude and resignation : in the hour of solitude, of sickness, and of sorrow, they have cheered my despondency, and soothed my distress ! Even now (said my father, looking tenderly at his wife and children) they fill up the pause of employment, and the interval of paternal and connubial bliss ; and although, no doubt, they occasionally remind me of their *unprofitableness*, I am afraid I would not willingly exchange them for all that Fortune could bestow.” What a pity it is (said Mr Balfour, melting into tears of transport) that one who can speak so *well* in favour of learning, should ever say any thing against it ! O rectam sinceramque vitam ! O

E

dulce

dulce otium honestumque ac pene omnia negotia pulchris !”

THIS conversation, however, was productive of very different effects, on my mind, from what my father intended. The conclusion of his speech, in *favour* of classical education, overturned all he had previously advanced against it ; and the glow and enthusiasm of Mr Balfour’s affection for the ancients, naturally led me to suppose that something exquisitely delightful was annexed to their acquaintance. From that moment I became a scholar in sentiment and inclination—the *dulce otium*—the *rectam sinceramque vitam*, were implanted in the soil—I sighed for an introduction to the walks of literature, taste, and imagination ; nor was it long before honest Balfour brought this introduction about, notwithstanding my father’s positive prohibition to the contrary. He was the more induced to take this step, from the following accidental discovery of my natural disposition ; for in spite of every resolution

lution on my part, or imposed task on his, certain parts of OVID and VIRGIL were never recited aloud in the school, but the account-book, slate, and pencil were instantly laid aside, and forgot as completely as if they had never been in hand.

ONE day, in particular, as this little sovereign of literature was strutting across the school, expounding in strong emphasis and intonation the passionate and affecting story of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*, his eye accidentally caught me, while listening with greedy ears, and my whole countenance expressive of emotion. Struck with the singularity of my appearance, he accosted me with—"Well, Mr Charles, have you worked your question?"—"No, Sir (said I with some confusion), I have not."—"And why are you not busy then?"—"Sir (said I with infinite naiveté), I cannot work any question, or attend to any thing else, while you are repeating the story of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*." Conceiving this a compliment

paid to his powers of translation, and unable to conceal the pleasure it conveyed, he immediately rejoined—"And would you not like, my dear boy! to be able to read those beautiful stories in the language in which they are written, and which as far surpasses the best translation that can be given, as the splendour of yonder sun is to the faint glimmering of a rush taper?"—"O yes, Sir (said I with a deep sigh, and dejected look), but my papa will not consent to it!"—"Then you *shall* be enabled (replied the enraptured pedagogue), whether he consents to it or not; for, rather than suffer such genius to remain uncultured, I shall teach you without your papa's knowledge, and that too without fee or reward." And indeed, this worthy admirer of the Romans was as good as his promise; for as I boarded with him for some time after, he contrived, by unwearied attention on his side, and uncommon application on mine, to lay no bad foundation for ascending, at a future period, to the '*more lofty and dignified parts of education.*' But the
time

time now approached when these plans were to be frustrated, and when this favourite pupil was to be torn, not only from the tuition of a kind preceptor, but from the protection of the tenderest and most affectionate of parents.

HAVING arrived at my fourteenth year, and received all those essential parts of education which my father deemed necessary, my relation in Bristol anxiously waited my arrival. A time was therefore fixed for this separation; which hung so heavy on the minds of my mother and sister, that a constant gloom and depression of spirits reigned throughout the family for some months previous to my departure. My father, although he wore the semblance of tranquillity, and, to fortify my mother's mind, even expatiated on the advantages that would accrue from this event, felt all those tender emotions that usually spring up when we are about to lose an object of affection; and when my mother, overcome with the idea of an eternal adieu, used to give vent to her

forrows and complaints, he was no longer able to carry on the disguise. My leaving them at this time, too, was rendered doubly distressing by the news of my brother's death in Jamaica, which arrived but a few months before. This circumstance, independent of the grief it produced, awakened all those apprehensions which distracted my mother's mind on my approaching departure; for, with a presentiment which indeed the conclusion authorised, she could never be reasoned out of a firm belief that our parting would be the last. My sister, though five years older, had long been my constant companion when at home; and some time before my departure, an additional strength of affection had sprung up between us. Whole nights would we sit up conversing by the fire-side, when all the rest of the family were asleep; whole evenings walk out together, heedless and indifferent to any other society. These stolen interviews escaped not the observation of my father and mother; and while it yielded them delight, it likewise added to the poignancy of their

their affliction, when they reflected how soon such endearing ties would be broken. "Inhuman monsters! (would my mother exclaim, alluding to those who had defrauded my father of his property) inhuman monsters! thus to rob me of my children; scatter them abroad, and tear them asunder, when Nature has cemented them so closely together!"

My route was first to Glasgow, where I was to remain some time, and from thence to Greenock; from which place I was to embark for Bristol. On the morning of my departure, my mother rose early; and before I was ready to mount my little poney, had rode off precipitately to avoid what she well knew would happen. A message from my father summoned me to his bed-chamber when I was about to depart. I found him in bed, the curtains drawn, and the room purposely darkened. Taking me by the hand, he addressed me in the following words, which I have often repeated since with tenderness, and which, at this moment,

ment, are still engraven on my mind: “ My dear Charles, you are now to be placed beyond the reach of my instructions; and I flatter myself, that after what I have so anxiously laboured to produce, any farther instructions of mine will henceforth be unnecessary. You have received from Nature good dispositions and good parts; let not the example of worthless and contemptible minds debase them. Whatever your faults and follies may be (for no man is without them), let them be the faults and follies of a *gentleman*. Shun low company; and always aspire to society above you. Consider a mean action as worse than death; for no length of time can wipe it out. Be a man of truth and fidelity; and whatever your lot in life may be, think not any honest profession below your notice, nor your employer’s interest a matter of indifference. Avoid quarrels by gentleness and civility to all; but check insolence and audacity with becoming firmness and spirit. In a word, be a man of honour, a man of humanity, and, above all, a servant to
your

your God; and may God Almighty direct and protect you in all your ways!" Having delivered himself thus, he pressed me to his bosom; and, muffling his head with the bed-cloathes, I could hear, as I went out of the room, the stifled groans of grief and affection burst from his manly breast.

TILL this time my heart had never known the full sympathy of grief, nor any of those emotions which had so long agitated the rest of the family. I had seen my mother and sister, and even the servants, repeatedly in tears at my approaching departure; while the prospect of new scenes and delightful objects made me wonder at their affliction. But the moment my father's struggling sorrows reached my ears, all my tenderness arose, and burst into an agony of grief. Poor Henrietta, who till then had sat weeping in silence below, soon caught the sound; which, operating like an electric stroke on the gentleness of her nature, produced concords in perfect union. "O Charles! Charles!"
(exclaimed

(exclaimed this affectionate girl, as I at last escaped from her frantic embrace), my dear, my lovely, Charles! I shall never, *never* see you more."——Alas! Henrietta! little did I think, at the time, that a prophetess so young would have spoken so true.

My stay at Glasgow was for some months; during which I received the last polish to my country education. I remember little more of my voyage to Bristol, than the most excessive sea-sickness, which produced an early dislike to a mode of life which I never since could relish, although it has been my lot to experience a great deal of its trials. My destination at Bristol did not tend to eradicate these impressions.

ON my arrival, I was sensibly struck with a change of scene very opposite to what I had formerly experienced. My cousin's house was situated in one of the most fashionable parts of the town, and fitted up in a style, not only
handsome,

handsome, but elegant. The whole displayed taste joined to the utmost neatness; and such were the extraordinary attentions paid to cleanliness, scrubbing, waxing, and hard rubbing, that I got several falls in the rooms and passages before I was forty-eight hours in the house. As for the stairs, I was positively prohibited ascending them with my shoes on the very day after my arrival: but I shall defer all farther description of the house till I give some account of its inhabitants.

My cousin had early in life, by a steady and judicious prosecution of his profession, acquired, in the course of between twenty and thirty years, a genteel competency; which enabled him to live in ease and affluence at home on the fruits of his former industry. He had been for a number of years engaged in the Guinea trade; but the principal source of his wealth had flowed from his West India connections. During the latter part of his nautical operations, he had become chief owner
of

of a large ship in the Bristol trade ; and opening store-houses in the different West India islands to which he sailed, he had not only gained considerably by traffic, but had necessarily become acquainted with the leading men in these islands ; with some of whom he established regular freights for his ship, and fixed himself as agent for them at home. It was in this last employment he was engaged on my arrival in Bristol ; and although he had a variety of concerns in different vessels in the West India trade, he had for some years retired from the fatigues of a sea life, and sending his son out to St Christopher's to supply his presence there, contented himself with the business he had to transact at home, which was little more than an amusement. Although an intercourse with men of fortune and fashion had considerably smoothed the roughness of the seaman, a good deal of it still remained. He was, moreover, independent of every thing annexed to profession ; a man naturally blunt and sincere ; warm in his friendships, and positive in his

his

his determinations. Though possessed of a large share of philanthropy and good nature, he was not only hot, but ungovernable in his anger; and although few men had a better heart, or a sounder understanding, he was frequently unreasonable in his passions, and altogether ridiculous during their influence. He had some years before my arrival buried his wife, with whom it was said he enjoyed but little harmony; and he now lived with a daughter, a young lady of about eighteen, who, with his son in the West Indies, were the only fruits of his marriage. Miss PATTY was her father's favourite, and indeed possessed the arts of wheedling, coaxing, and leading the old gentleman in no inferior degree. She had been the chief agent in watching and detecting the mother's tippling operations, which was one of the principal sources of misunderstanding between husband and wife; and as Miss had various conversations with her father on the subject, and was also the means of conveying interesting intelligence to her mother relative to

F

the

the old gentleman's amours, she became a mutual confidant, peacemaker, and adviser in the family; which could not fail to enhance her consequence with both parties. Add to this, that Miss Patty possessed a large portion of cunning; and with a spirit bold, haughty, and overbearing, could at any time affect the meekness and gentleness of a lamb. Indeed it was so far lucky for her, that this suppleness and disguise could be assumed at pleasure; for the strange whims and whirlwinds of the old gentleman's temper certainly required some such subterfuge. One of his invariable practices, was to repair to certain clubs every evening, where he dedicated his convivial hours to the society of his West India friends and connections, from whom he seldom parted till very late hours, and generally as happy as rum-punch could make him. On rapping furiously at the door, his constant rule was to knock down, if possible, the person who opened it: no matter whom the porter was; servant, wife, or daughter, were sure to share the same fate: and

and notwithstanding a most contrite repentance next morning, the same practice was repeated the succeeding night. 'Tis true, the danger was easily evaded; for, like those animals of prey who seem to lose all their ferocity after the first or second unsuccessful bound, my cousin, on lifting up his gold-headed cane, and striking hard, with accompanying grunts, once or twice against the pavement, seemed as well satisfied, and as highly delighted with the attempt, as if he had actually knocked down a servant, a daughter, or a wife, at every stroke.

ANOTHER whim, from which he never deviated, was, that at whatever time of night he returned home, no mortal, whether domestic, friend, or stranger, were suffered to retire to rest before his arrival. This was a kind of *night watch* which he established in his house, in imitation of that formerly kept on board ship: and indeed, in general, his house may be said to have been governed by rules equally strict, and delivered in a tone equally arbitrary,

trary, as if it had been the ELIZABETH. It may well be supposed that I could not have dreamed of such uncommon practices; and Miss *Patty*, who possessed little gentleness or humanity of disposition, and who wished to break some jokes on the simplicity of one who had seen nothing but regularity and decorum in his father's house, studiously kept me ignorant of the secret. The very night after my arrival, I was suffered to go to bed early; and about one o'clock in the morning was roused from a profound sleep by one of the maids; who told me, in seeming terror, that the *Captain* was in a violent rage at my having gone to bed, and had ordered me to get up and appear before him instantly. Amazed at this inexplicable summons, I hurried down to the parlour, and found the old gentleman in a melancholy state of intoxication, and Miss *Patty* enjoying the fruits of her admirable invention.

ON my entrance, I was accosted in the following terms: "Come here, Sir! Why, you

d—d

d—d young dog, how dare you go to bed before I come home—Eh! what? do you think you are in your father's house in *the country*; where, because they have nothing to amuse them, every body goes, stupidly, to snore at ten o'clock—Eh! D—n my blood, Sir, if ever you presume to go to bed before I come home, were it six in the morning, I'll have you tied up, you young dog!—I will—Aye!" In return to this speech (the first of the kind I had ever heard), I asked pardon, pleaded total ignorance of his regulations, and promised rigidly to observe them in future. All this time Miss Patty continued laughing immoderately at my confusion, astonished looks, and Scotch accent; while the father, drunk as he was, discovered the trick, and relaxed in his severity. "So you were not told that I should be angry at your going to bed before I came home—Eh!"—"No indeed, Sir (said I), otherwise I never should have gone."—"Why, you little b—! how came *you* not to tell him—Eh!"—"Lard, papa! I did tell him; but the boy was

so sleepy and stupid, he could attend to nothing."—" Pardon me, Madam! (said I) you never mentioned any such thing. On the contrary, you asked me if I chose to go to bed before I thought of it."—" What! Sir (said Miss, colouring with shame and resentment), do you dare to contradict me to my face?"—" I have always been taught, Ma'am, to speak truth, and vindicate myself when I am unjustly accused—I am doing nothing more at present."—" Why, here's a pretty fellow truly!—A *Scotch boy* to give himself such airs!—But you must learn better manners in *this house*, Sir!"—" But, by G—d! he *must not* (said the old gentleman firmly)—the boy talks as he ought to do, and I like his spirit—Do you go to bed, Miss Pert, and do you sit down, boy; I want to talk to you." Miss went off, with a toss of the head, muttering something about Scotch pride, and Scotch poverty; and I continued above an hour in conversation with the old gentleman, who asked me a number of questions relative to my father's family, presenting

presenting me with some pears, which, in the course of his rolls and tumbles, he had bruised to pieces in his pockets.

THE next day, it was evident from Miss Patty's looks that she owed me a grudge ; nor was it long before she took an effectual method to be revenged. In the evening, the Captain, according to custom, went to one of his Punch clubs ; and as we were all assembled in the kitchen (for Miss Patty, with all her consequence, disdained not the society of the maids), his well-known rap announced his arrival. Here (said Miss, putting a candle hastily into my hand)—here, run and let in your cousin ; and take care he does not hurt you." Happy at an opportunity to convince him how well I had observed his orders in not going to bed, I flew to the door ; on opening which, my first salute was the old gentleman's cane across my head, with a violence that stretched me senseless on the passage. The maids, who had dreaded the consequence, notwithstanding Miss Patty's artful

ful admonition of "*take care he does not hurt you*", hastened after me with another candle, and discovered to the Captain the effects of his salutation. When he perceived me motionless and bleeding, his fears soon got the better of his intoxication; and, with the most violent agitation, desired them to carry me into the parlour, exclaiming repeatedly—"Who desired him to open the door? Blast you all in a heap! Who desired him to open the door?" Miss came running, with seeming concern, saying, "Lard! my dear papa! I did; and I desired him to take care you did not hurt him: but the boy is a fool."—"You are a d——d little b——! (said the old gentleman, with infinite rage) you had no business to desire him to open the door at all, and be d——d to you. I have murdered the boy, who is worth a hundred of you, you little b——; he is!" I soon, however, removed those dreadful apprehensions by my recovery; which transported the good man so much, that he took me in his arms, all bloody as I was, saying, "My dear Charles,

Charles, I ask you pardon. I did not know it was you, my dear boy. I took it for that dog FISHER; I did, by G—d. But why did you not keep at the back of the door, man? Eh!" On his finding, by my answers, that I had received no previous warning of my danger, he darted a furious look at his daughter, who sat sobbing, and protesting her innocence; alleging, that in her anxiety to let her dear papa in soon, she had absolutely forgot that I was a stranger to his practice. As for me, I had not the most distant conception that any person could have been malicious enough to have hatched so wicked a scheme; and while the servants washed my wound, and the old gentleman expressed his concern at the accident, I begged of him to think no more of it, observing, with a smile, that I had often lost ten times more blood at a boxing-match at school. "Fine boy! fine boy! fine boy! (repeated the old gentleman) but, by G—d (looking at his daughter), *some body* shall suffer for this. I'll be d——d if they shan't."

I KNOW not what passed betwixt Miss and her father next morning ; but from that period no more tricks were played upon me by the lady ; who, although she behaved with civility, was never cordially attached to her Scotch cousin, notwithstanding he lost no opportunity to oblige her. As for her father, he became more and more fond of me daily. Some mornings after my arrival, he took me into his counting-house, where he transacted almost every thing himself ; and desiring me to copy an account current which lay on the table, went out to his usual routine of business on the keys and wharfs ; which operations he constantly performed immediately after breakfast. On his return, he was not only pleased, but astonished at my writing. “ Ah ! by G—d, you write a fine hand, boy ! Where the devil did you learn to write so well ? Why, you young dog, you are fit for any counting-house in England. I wish my sneaking little fellow wrote half so well ; but, d—n my blood, *he* will never do much good.” Although the old gentleman’s intentions

intentions were to bring me up to the sea, his sagacity pointed out to him, that acquirements such as I possessed ought not to be neglected. I was therefore put to a school; the master of which was accounted to excel in the mode of teaching book-keeping, but particularly in penmanship; specimens of which were distributed about Bristol, and universally allowed to be altogether extraordinary. I continued not long, however, under his instructions; an occurrence happened which broke the bands between master and scholar, and which, as it tends to support former precepts, and elucidate character, I shall here take the liberty to mention.

THE principal excellence of this wonderful penman I soon discovered was the art of painting his letters. His desk was at the farther end of the school, and placed so as to prevent any of his scholars from approaching him abruptly. He was almost constantly employed in executing specimens of his incomparable art for the inspection of the public; and no sooner

sooner did he perceive any of us drawing near, than he immediately stopt short, and concealed his performance within his desk. Suspecting what really was the case, I watched an opportunity; and when he least expected, perceived, before he could convey the paper out of view, part of the performance executed with a black-lead pencil, and part finished in the usual capital manner with the pen. He wrote various hands; among which was the German text, in which he conceived he excelled all mankind. As I had likewise attended to this character, I one day chanced to execute a small specimen; with which some of the old scholars were so much pleased, that they shewed it to the master. After having examined it minutely for some time with his glass (without which he never drew a stroke), he, with evident ill nature, addressed me publicly in the following terms: “ Mr Macpherson, I would advise you not to attempt any thing in this character till you are better instructed. You know nothing at all of the matter, Sir : it is entirely above your abilities,

abilities, whatever good opinion you may have of yourself." Abashed, and not a little nettled at the wantonness of this public attack, for having done what certainly ought to have produced a contrary behaviour, I replied, with an ironical sneer, " Perhaps, Sir, it would have been better had it been *painted*."—" What do you mean by that, Sir (said my little master, colouring with rage and confusion, for some of the scholars had accompanied my retort with a loud laugh), what do you mean by that, Sir? Do you dare to insinuate that *I* ever paint my letters? If you do, you are a *little lying rascal*." The love of truth, which a father's invariable instructions and last words had so strongly imprinted on my mind, joined to a consciousness of the impudent falsehood of my opponent, transported me beyond all bounds of prudence; and, rising instantly from my seat, I, to the astonishment of the whole school, addressed him in the following words: "*I* do dare to accuse you of painting *all* your letters; and, as a proof of which, I defy you to

G

execute

execute publicly before any of us, *without* painting, one line the least equal to those which, in that corner, you finish by the help of a glass and a black-lead pencil. You have been pleased to call me a *lying rascal*. I would have you know, Sir, that I never told a lie in my life: I wish I could say as much for my present master." Having said this, I threw aside my book in a rage, and taking up my hat, walked out of the school with an air of defiance, which the little man, stunned, and indeed stupified, at the *hardieffe* of my behaviour, did not attempt to resent.

ON my return home, I briefly recounted the circumstance to my cousin; who, instead of reproving me, as I expected, laughed heartily, saying, "Why, d—n my blood, Sir, you are a fellow of spirit! Eh? What? to talk in this manner to your *Master*? Why, I suppose, were you on board ship, you would talk thus to your *Captain*? Would you, you young dog, Eh?" Upon my observing that, except
to

to my father and nearest relations, I would hold this language to any man upon earth who dared to call me a *lying rascal*, he laughed immoderately, saying, "By the L—d, you are a lad of spunk. I see, my friend, the Captain, has instilled a sufficient dose of his *military honour* into his children: but, d—n it, it is right. We must not check it; nor shall you go back at all to that sneaking son of a b—; who, if he dares to make a noise, I'll break his neck for him—I'll be cursed if I don't!"

AT this time an intimate female friend of my father's having come from London on a visit to my cousin, interested herself so much in my behalf, as to alter the old gentleman's intentions of sending me, on my first voyage, to the coast of Africa. "Good G—d! (said she one day, as I was informed by the servants) how could you ever dream of sending this boy, the very first voyage, to such a horrid place as Guinea, and in such an infernal employ as the slave trade! Why, he is altogether unqualified

for it; the delicacy of his constitution, the mildness of his temper, and the gentleness of his nature, could never stand it.”—“Poh! Poh! (said my cousin) the devil a mildness or gentleness is about him; he has a d——d deal of spirit, I can assure you. Why, he quarrelled with his *schoolmaster* the other day for calling him a liar.” And accordingly related the whole circumstances of my scholastic rupture. “There is nothing in all you have told me, my dear Sir (said the lady), that overturns what I at first asserted; the boy has been brought up with a high sense of honour, and fires at the accusation of unworthiness. But, my dear Captain! the same spirit that feels so acutely, and spurns so nobly at injustice, will sink under brutal oppression, and human misery. I have studied that boy minutely since I have been in your house; and I repeat it again, that his nature is gentle, humane, and compassionate, to an extreme. It was but yesterday (continued she) that I begged of him to read to me the story of INKLE and YARICO, so beautifully

fully told in the Spectator. Come, Charles, said I, you are now about visiting places and people where commerce and wealth are the principal objects; you ought to study early every method to benefit your fortune. The story of Inkle and Yarico will instruct you. Read it, my dear, and tell me how you like it. He instantly obeyed; and during his reading I watched his countenance; which indeed indicated strongly the workings of those passions which the amiable author meant to excite. When he came to the conclusion, he shut the book; and looking up in my face, with his eyes swimming in tears, said, ‘And is it by such lessons and examples as these, Madam, that you would have me better my fortune?’ —And why not, Charles? said I, forcing a laugh to conceal my emotions; *Yarico* was of a different colour; and blacks, you know, are bought and sold in Africa and the West Indies like horses and oxen. After a pause, he sighed, and, in the most emphatic manner, said, ‘Yes; and it is *there*, it seems, *I am to*

make my fortune!' He strove to conceal his emotions, which, however, seemed to increase; and, making me a bow, abruptly left the room. Indeed, my dear Captain, you *must* not think of sending him to Africa. Send him (said she, taking him kindly by the hand), send him to the West Indies, or any where but to that dreadful coast of Guinea."—" Well! 'Well! (said the old gentleman, overcome by her persuasive manner) he *shall* go to the West Indies then; but I'll be d——d if he will make half as much of it as the other."

A FEW days after, Captain H—— of the Ruby dined at my cousin's, to whom I was introduced as my future commander to Basterre, St Christopher's. This person (who was one of your gentlemen captains, and a man of excellent character) my cousin pitched upon as a kind of guide and instructor during my continuance on board. I was entered on the ship's books an ordinary seaman; but my birth and mess were in the steerage with the officers.

If

If I liked the sea after my arrival in St Kitts, I was to continue on board the Ruby, and be advanced the next voyage; but in case I preferred staying in the West Indies, my cousin gave me letters to several of his friends, and our mutual connections in Bassterre, among whom was his son. “He is a silly sneaking little fellow (said he, as he gave me the letter for him); but he may be of service to you if you wish to remain in the country.”

PREVIOUS to these final regulations, my female friend had left Bristol, with a view to procure for me, if possible, an ensigncy in the army; a line of life which, she perceived, I pointed at. This, however, she was obliged carefully to conceal from my cousin, as she well knew his aversion to that profession. We had many conversations together; all of which evinced a strong and unfeigned regard on her side. On the evening of her departure, she took me by the hand, and held the following short discourse: “My dear Charles! you are now about entering on a boisterous and trying line
of

of life. I do not think that nature has formed you for it; but I am confident, that the spirit and sentiments you possess, will enable you to bear up firmly, and even cheerfully, against the little rubs and hardships inseparable from the profession. I wish to God it may be in my power to provide for you otherwise; and if any thing can be done, you may rely on my exertions. In the mean time, let nothing escape you that may induce your cousin to suspect that you dislike your present destination, or that I proposed looking out for any other. You know he is your chief director, to whom you must look for future success, and to whose temper and inclinations you ought to dedicate your whole attention. He is rough in his manner, as most men in his profession are; but he is friendly, generous, and sincere, and has really a great regard for you. I know not if I ever shall have the happiness of seeing you again; I hope I shall: but in case I should not, you must allow me to leave you a small remembrance of one who has been your adviser, and who will ever be your friend." Saying this, while

while the tears started in her eyes, she slipped a green silk purse into my hand; and hurrying out, stepped into the carriage that waited for her at the gate.

My cousin, the Captain, accompanied her as far as Bath; where she was to remain some days before she returned to London. On his coming back, he looked slyly at me, and said, "Why, boy! you are a d——d favourite with the women already; I don't know what the hell you'll be by and bye. Mrs. ——— (said he, turning to his daughter) did hardly any thing all the way to Bath but talk of that young dog there. Did she make you any present, boy?"—"Yes, Sir (said I), she did, and I am altogether distressed at it."—"Distressed (said the old gentleman) at what?"—"Lard, Papa (said Miss Patty), I never saw such an unaccountable boy in my life! Mrs. ——— made him a present of her picture set in gold, and twenty guineas in a green silk purse, wrapped up in one of the *sweetest letters*

I ever saw: and do you know, he has been quite miserable on account of the *money*, notwithstanding her having delicately marked on the envelope, ‘*For Sea Store.*’ He talks, forsooth, of his *honour*; says he may never have an opportunity to repay the debt; considers it *charity*; and says that his father never would forgive him, if he knew he had accepted a present of money from any body. I declare (concluded Miss with a flirt of her fan) I have no patience with the ridiculous pride of these Scotchmen.”—“Come, come, Miss (said the old gentleman) give us none of your fine airs. Ridiculous as this pride may appear to you, it is a d——d deal better than *meanness*. But make yourself easy, boy; there is no occasion to growl over this heavy obligation. It is only given as a mark of regard, man; it can never be considered as *charity*, for you was in no need of it. *I am* to fit you out, you dog; and I shall do it *properly*: But what do you say as to the picture, Eh? Don’t you wish to return it likewise?”—“No, Sir (said I with emotion),

I wish to preserve it with my life ! I shall place it next my heart, as the dearest token of the worth and goodness of the giver ; nor would I part with it for thousands !” The old boy grinned, shook his head, and said, “ I’ll be d—d if you wont make rare work among the girls yet, or I am cursedly out in my reckoning.”

EVERY thing being ready for my departure, my cousin took me into his counting-room, and, for the first time, gave me the following serious admonition : “ Now, my boy, you must mind your hits, and there is no fear of you. I have put you with a man who will take care of you ; and who, on my account, wont allow you to be ill used, for he is an intimate friend of mine, and a d——d fine fellow. I don’t know if you will like the sea : I wish you may ; because in that case we can do something for you. *How’s’ever*, don’t let this confine you to what you don’t like ; for I have endeavoured to get a birth for you in St Kitt’s among our friends there. You write a d——n good hand, and under-

understand accounts and book-keeping very well; so that if you like a clerkship, there is no fear of your remaining long without one. My son I have desired to take special care of you. I imagine he will be happy to have you about him: he is a silly trifling fellow, and you may be of service to him; for although he is good ten years older, I'll be cursed if he writes half as good a hand, or knows as much of book-keeping as you do. But, my dear boy Charles, all depends on yourself: I only put you under weigh; it rests with you how and when you get into port. You must be *diligent, smart, and active*. Keep good company, my boy; and steer clear of those infernal black b——s. I have given you a venture of cheese; in return, send me home some good coffee. D'ye hear? write to me often; and let me know if you want any thing. I'll not *forget* you, my boy; for, not to say any thing of my old friend and schoolfellow, your excellent father, I have a regard for you Charles. D—n my blood if I hav'n't!" Saying this, he shook me by the hand,

hand, with a convulsive affection; and, as I looked up in his face, I perceived all the rough bluntness of this warm-hearted, honest seaman, softened and melted into tenderness.

As to Miss Patty, she experienced no such emotions. She received me with the utmost composure; and as the two maids stood blubbering in the passage, laughed heartily at them, and even chid them for their *ridiculous folly*, as she was pleased to term it. I had almost forgot to mention, that, a few days before my departure, I received a letter from my London benefactress, regretting, in the most expressive terms, her inability to procure the ensigncy, and pouring out her whole heart in prayers for my prosperity. Excellent mortal! it was the last favour I ever received from her. In less than a twelvemonth after my arrival in the West Indies, I received from my father an account of her death: a circumstance which at that time affected me sensibly; and even at this moment, while I contemplate the benign

H

features

features of a picture which, for thirty years, has literally been '*next my heart*,' I cannot help paying a tribute to virtues which, in the morn of life, watched over artless innocence, and smoothed the destined path of trials to that of ease and tranquillity !

ON my repairing aboard the Ruby (which was a letter of marque), I found that my cousin had made ample provision for my comfort. Captain H—— likewise paid every attention he could bestow, on one whom it was necessary to impress with a proper sense of his station. Under colour of my writing so fine a hand, he had me daily in the cabin to keep his journal ; on which occasions I generally breakfasted with him and the cabin passengers. Every other part of duty, however, belonging to the ship, I was obliged to perform with the rest of the sailors ; who never failed to crack their jokes on '*my straight head of hair*', the modesty of my demeanour, and the delicacy of my complexion : Swearing, that I was more like a woman

woman than any thing else, and that they would have me overhauled. I nevertheless bore their gibes with good humour, and entered into all their sea fun with cheerfulness. My messmates, the second mate, carpenter, gunner, and cooper, became fonder of me every day, and boldly prognosticated that, before the end of the voyage, I should be as good a seaman as ever stepped between stem and stern—But they were mistaken! NATURE, in spite of a cheerful temper and willing mind, still recoiled from scenes, which presented nothing but a rugged surface, and an association rude, boisterous, and obscene. She still sighed (though unknown to me) for the *dulce otium* of literature; for those haunts of peacefulness and quiet, so congenial to certain minds; those associations which afford wit, sentiment, and humour; those endearing intercourses which inspire delicacy, sensibility, and love! I had, therefore, no sooner arrived at St Christopher's, seen my little cousin on board, and received a pressing invitation to live with him, than I left the Ru-

by, and hastened on shore with a transport not to be described. On my repairing to his store, I found assembled a number of those relations to whom I had brought letters from the old gentleman at Bristol; all of whom received me with much affection, and were pleased to say some very flattering things of my appearance. “*Och hoich!* (said an elderly Highland gentleman, who was a relation, and of the same name) *Och hoich!* but he is like his *faither!* It is now upwards of twenty years since I saw the *Captain*—He was then the handsomest man I ever beheld. I should have kent that laddie to have been related to the family of ———, had I met him on the tap of Brimstone hill.”

the
is that
I HAD not been long at St Christopher's, till I experienced the truth of the old gentleman's observations with respect to his son's character. To an extreme ignorance in business, he possessed an overweening vanity and conceit, which rejected all admonition; the general attendants of weak minds. Joined to this, he was a schemer without

without a head to plan; and a projector, without the power to bring his projects into action; and while he grasped eagerly at every expedient to accumulate wealth, the imbecility of his intellects eternally subjected him to unnecessary expences and difficulties: to extricate himself from which, he had often recourse to a species of meanness and injustice, which procured him the merited contempt and censure of his fellow-citizens. Without one idea relative to commerce or nautical operations, this strange creature possessed a kind of *rage* for purchasing old crazy vessels, or such as were out of repair, merely on account of a *bargain*. These, while they drained him of every shilling he could collect, before they could be put into serviceable condition, generally turned out to no account at the end; and while this constant sink precluded regular remittances to his father, it subjected him to a multitude of actions for the recovery of debts incurred on the spot; which,

it may well be supposed, must have added considerably to his embarrassment.

IN about nine months after my arrival, he found it necessary to revisit Britain to appease the old gentleman's resentment, which, from repeated letters, seemed to be great. Preparing therefore, in the best way he could, for an interview which he dreaded exceedingly, he addressed me one day in private on the subject; telling me, how much he had my interest at heart, and how much he would rejoice at my future prosperity: That his intentions were to take me into partnership at a proper period; but that, previous to this step, it became necessary for him to go home, in order to procure a proper assortment of goods for market; and that, in the interim, it was highly proper I should obtain a thorough knowledge of business in that country, so as to qualify myself for executing my part on his return: That with this view, he had luckily procured for me a most desirable situation with a gentleman of

Bafsterre,

Bafsterre, who had lately established himself in the mercantile line advantageously in Guadaloupe, whether he had just gone to regulate matters previous to the arrival of his wife and family, who were shortly to follow : That this gentleman was eminent for his knowledge and abilities in business ; understood the French language perfectly ; and had agreed to take me for three years, with a salary of L. 70 the first year, to be increased L. 10 annually, and every thing else provided : That on his (my cousin's) arrival in Bristol, he should make it his business to mention me in the most favourable manner to his father, to whom he advised me to write ; and that, by the time I was conversant in commercial transactions, he made little doubt of obtaining his father's consent to my having a share in the business. All this was very flattering ; and, as it may well be imagined, very agreeable to a youth of fifteen ; who, independent of a strong propensity to see new scenes and new faces, naturally looked forward to a situation that ultimately promised
respec-

respectability. It was, however, as I afterwards experienced, nothing more than a fine story, fabricated to please, and to induce me to write home favourably to the old gentleman; who, it seems, had repeatedly enjoined his son, by letter, to pay every attention to my interest; and, rather than leave me unprovided, to bring me home with him.

As soon as an opportunity offered, I embarked on board of a small vessel; which, after having touched at Nevis, Montserrat, St Vincent's, and Dominica, arrived at *Port Louis*, Grandterre, the destined spot of my residence. On repairing to Mr Penguin's store (for that was the name of my employer), I found a tall, thin, genteel, young man, about the age of twenty-four, writing behind a counter, in company with another, who appeared some years younger, both dressed in linen waistcoats and holland night-caps. Having announced myself, Mr Penguin, with more superciliousness, I thought, than civility, said, he was glad to see
me

me *at last*, for that he had given me up for lost. "This is Mr Garvie (said he) your fellow clerk, a particular friend of mine; he is acquainted with the nature of my business here, and will direct you how to act. I am told you write a fine hand; pray, was it in *Scotland* you learnt to write?"—"Yes, Sir (said I), it was there I received the principal part of my education."—"O ho! (said he, giving a significant look to Garvie) I believe every body is well educated that comes from that country—Are they not?"—"I never understood so, Sir (said I): gentlemens sons generally are."—"O, they are? Eh? and I suppose you are a gentleman's son—an't you?"—"I have always been taught to think so, Sir."—"Your father is a *laird*, I suppose." This elegant stroke of wit and good breeding, to a modest youth, on his first appearance, produced an immoderate laugh from his friend Garvie; which encouraged Mr Penguin to pursue his inquiries thus: "So he is not a laird then?"—"No, Sir (said I), my father's life has been chiefly spent in the army."

army.”—“ And he finds it necessary, I suppose, to send his son from poverty at home to make a fortune among his countrymen in the West Indies ?”—“ My coming to this country was no act of my father’s, Sir ; it was my cousin Captain ——— in Bristol that regulated that matter.”—“ Aye ! aye ! (said this polite gentleman) *your cousins*, and your *cousins-german*, your uncles, your aunts, and all the tribe of needy adventurers beyond the Tweed, will land in this devoted country at last. D—n my blood ! if I don’t believe that, in less than twenty years, Scotchmen will root out every other inhabitant in the West Indies !”. So saying, he left the store to transact some necessary business abroad, leaving me impressed with no very favourable bodings of my future comforts with such an employer.

GARVIE (who was a good-natured pleasant laughing fellow). took an immediate opportunity to apologise for Mr Penguin’s rudeness, and to relieve me from a confusion and surprise

prize which, I dare say, my countenance strongly indicated. “ You must not be hurt at Mr Penguin’s behaviour (said he). He likes a joke, and sometimes carries it too far ; but I believe, on the whole, it proceeds more from a design to try peoples temper than from any thing else. ’Tis true, he hates your countrymen, as the greatest part of us West Indians do ; and it is not once or twice, but repeatedly, that he has got himself into awkward predicaments from his talking too freely of their *poverty, pride, cunning, and fawning servility*. You must lay your account with receiving rubs daily : but, I flatter myself, you will think nothing of it ; for depend on it, that the more you seem to feel, the more you will receive. Mr Penguin’s temper is far from being good ; he is both passionate and revengeful : and you know, since people are obliged to live together, as we do, it is better to wink at a number of things than quarrel. With all his faults, he is friendly ; and where he takes an attachment, will go great lengths to serve—even a Scotch-man.

man: He has got a sweet young woman for a wife; to whom he has been married about a twelvemonth. He is fond of her to distraction; and *so jealous*, that a man can hardly say or do a civil thing to her but he is seized with a kind of madness. He will be jealous of *you* (said Garvie laughing), as sure as death."—"Jealous of *me*! (said I, blushing excessively) what should make him jealous of me, pray?" Why I don't know (said Garvie slyly); that pretty blooming face of yours ought to do execution among the ladies; and Penguin is jealous of all handsome fellows. But I must make you acquainted with some of our French girls. They will charm you with their vivacity, and soon cure you of that blushing modesty of yours. You can't conceive how engaging they are: they are as superior to our St Kitt's girls as a mulatto wench is to a negress.

THIS short history, which Garvie gave me, of a man with whom I was likely to live for some years, was of some service. I easily fore-
saw

saw that I had a difficult game to play, and consequently that much would depend on my own conduct; that an unremitting attention to business, and a cheerful compliance with what was my duty, were the most likely means to acquire a proficiency in the profession of a merchant, and, at the same time, prevent any asperity or harshness from a person of Mr Penguin's temper. I therefore determined to give close application; and as nothing was more essential than a knowledge of the language generally spoken by the inhabitants of the island, my first ambition was to make myself master of the French tongue as quickly as possible.

IN about three months Mrs Penguin arrived from St Christopher's, where she had been detained on account of the delivery of her first born. This young woman was not above sixteen when she married, and notwithstanding her Creolian carriage and wan complexion, might be accounted handsome. She, indeed, like most of the West Indian ladies,

I

who

who have not received the advantages of a home education, was extremely ignorant and deficient in polite accomplishments; but, to a great sweetness of disposition, there was joined a certain soft expressive languor, so peculiar to the female inhabitants of these climes, which rendered her not only interesting, but attractive.

A SHORT time after her arrival, I was seized with one of those fevers that are incident to the climate, and which had very nearly carried me off. During my illness and recovery, she attended me with a care and tenderness which could not fail to produce gratitude on my part; although I easily perceived it occasioned very different sensations in her husband. One day as she sat on the side of my bed, and administered some cordial, which she had prepared herself, Mr Penguin suddenly came into the room, and, with one of his dreadful looks of dark revenge, ordered her immediately to get up. Upon their retiring to the adjoining room, I could distinctly overhear him reprehend her sharply for dedicating

dedicating so much of her time to my recovery ; concluding with a “ G—d d—n me, Madam ! has he not a doctor to attend him ? What the devil business have *you* with him ? ” — “ Good God ! Mr Penguin (said this good creature), how can you talk so ! would you have me allow the poor young man to perish for want of sustenance ! — The doctor has ordered such and such nourishment for him ; would it not be barbarous in me not to administer it, and do every thing in my power to recover a fellow-creature, just snatched from the brink of the grave ; still more, one whom all the town seem interested about, and whom, for gentleness and sweetness of disposition ” — “ D—n your sweetness and gentleness (exclaimed this tender husband in a rage), if you talk any such stuff to me again, by G—d I’ll break your neck ! ” Saying this, he flung out of the room, leaving me totally confounded at a language which I conceived impossible to escape from one whom the world called a kind and an affectionate husband.

IN about an hour after, Mrs Penguin came into my room, and, seating herself by me, kindly enquired after my health, and proposed some more nourishment. I perceived, by her eyes, that she had been in tears; and dreading a second visit from her tyrant, I, with as much eagerness as my languid state would permit, begged of her not to give herself so much trouble on my account. “The Negroes (said I), Madam, are sufficiently qualified to attend me. I am greatly better; nor is there the least occasion for a continuance of that kind attention, which I shall ever remember with gratitude.” The emotion with which I uttered this address, convinced her that I was no stranger to what had just passed between her and her husband. “You have heard, then, what passed in the next room (said she, with a most afflicted look). But I don’t care; he shall never make me inhuman, let him do what he will. He can but beat me; and that (said she, with a deep sigh) is nothing new.”

AFTER

AFTER she was gone, I was ruminating on the strange paradox of *a fond husband beating his wife*, when Garvie, who never failed to come and sit an hour or two with me after the store was shut, entered the room, and began to talk about the occurrences of the day. In the course of our conversation, I took an opportunity to relate what had passed between Mr and Mrs Penguin, and to enquire if he had ever heard of the circumstance which at that time filled me with so much astonishment. He answered in the negative, and seemed extremely shocked at my information. “But did not I tell you (said he) that Penguin would be jealous of you? I knew it, by heavens! (continued he, rubbing his hands and laughing immoderately) Why, man, all this has proceeded from nothing but stark-staring mad *jealousy*. By Jove, you are a pretty fellow, an’t you? to breed such a disturbance between man and wife. We shall have rare work by and bye, I see that. You and Penguin, I suppose, as soon as you are able to hold a pistol, will be fighting

I 3
ing

ing a duel.”—“ This is a very diverting subject (said I, Mr Garvie, gravely); but I should be glad to know what it is you really mean? *Jealous!* (exclaimed I) Of whom? of a poor sick emaciated creature, just escaped from the jaws of death? Is that an object of jealousy?”—“ O, I don’t mean (said Garvie) that Penguin is absolutely *horn mad*; but he is so fond of that woman——”—“ That he *beats her*” (said I).—“ Well! be that as it may (said Garvie), he is so fond of her and of his dear self, that he cannot bear to see her bestow the smallest marks of kindness or attention on any other man. Now, you are such a cursed favourite with the women——”—“ Poh! Poh! Garvie (said I), have done with your nonsense.”—“ O, you are devilish sly, Mr Macpherson; but for all your pretended modesty, you know it as well as I. Pray, Sir (said he, with a very significant look), how many messages have you had to-day inquiring after your health?”—“ Why, several (said I). There is surely nothing in that? Is it not natural for
neighbours

neighbours to inquire after the recovery of one who has been so dangerously ill?"—"Yes! yes! (said Garvie) and it is very natural, too, for *young ladies* to write billets doux to young gentlemen they are fond of. That must have been a very sweet one from Mademoiselle Antoinette? Eh? Nay, there is no occasion to blush, Mac: she is really a sweet girl; and, I believe, loves you as much as ever a French woman loved an Englishman. So saying, he left me to pass one of the most disagreeable nights I ever experienced.

MR PENGUIN, who commonly spent his evenings in the tavern playing for nips of punch at backgammon, did not return till after the usual time of supper. Mrs Penguin had again visited me before I went to rest; and, according to invariable custom, had given me some sago or panado with her own hands. I had dropt into a refreshing sleep, when I was awakened by repeated shrieks from Mrs Penguin's chamber; which, in a short time, ended
in

in groans, sobs, and lamentations. As the room was separated from mine only by a thin deal partition, I could distinctly hear Penguin say, with a kind of smothered rage, "Hold your tongue, d—n you!—hold your tongue, or I'll murder you." I never remember to have had my feelings more completely awakened; and had the shrieks continued, I firmly believe, weak as I was, I should have started from my sickbed, and rushed into Mrs Penguin's chamber.

THE perturbation of my mind kept me awake till near morning, when wearied nature sunk into a slumber; in which I continued till an old Negro woman (instead of Mrs Penguin) came into my room with breakfast. "How does your mistress do, Hannah" (said I)?—"Bad enough, Massa; bad enough."—"Where is she" (said I)?—"In ha bed, Massa. Heh! Some you Boccra bad too much. Dem de talk of poor Nega. (muttered the old lady to herself). Damme! Boccra worse na Nega! Black man

man no pinch kini so. Pinch te—e—e—: Shaw ! (exclaimed old Hannah, spitting as she went out) De dam shame ! Bocera no good !”

IT was easy to gather from Hannah’s hints and exclamations what pretty work had taken place the preceding night. The gentleman, according to custom after these nocturnal exploits, had rode into the country, under the pretence of collecting outstanding debts ; for when the fury of his passions subsided, he was always ready to cut his throat in the morning ; and so ashamed of his conduct, as to be unable to look the poor injured victim of his barbarity in the face. About noon Mrs Penguin got up ; and entering my chamber, in a faint voice asked kindly after my health, and how I had slept during the night. “ It has been the worst night I have experienced for a long time” (said I).—“ I am heartily sorry for it” (said she). I have not had a good one myself.” —“ No, I believe not, Madam (said I) ; and the badness of yours has been the cause of mine.”

mine.”—“ God blefs me ! But you could not but hear me (faid the poor girl, recollecting herfelf). Yet I could not help it, otherwife I am fure I would not have difturbed you for the whole world.”—“ Your difturbing me from a few hours reft (faid I), Mrs Penguin, was nothing, compared with the horror I felt at hearing your diftreffs ; had it continued longer, I certainly, weak as I am, would have attempted fomething desperate to have relieved you.”—“ For God Alinighty’s fake, my dear young friend (faid fhe, feating herfelf by me, and feizing my hand with evident emotion), make no fuch attempts as thefe ! Mr Penguin is a very extraordinary man ; and, with all his unhappy temper, loves me to diftraction. It is this love, which indeed fometimes borders on madnefs, that prompts him to ufe me fo unkindly. Come (faid fhe, with a languid fmile), I will keep from you no longer what it is impoffible to conceal from any perfon who lives in the fame houfe with us. Mr Penguin is jealous of every mortal to whom I
flew

shew the least attention; he wants to engross the whole to himself: and so extremely unreasonable and childish is he in this respect, that even the little attentions I have shown to you on a sickbed, have not only offended, but enraged him. You, I believe, overheard what passed between us yesterday afternoon; and last night, on his returning from the tavern, and going to bed, he renewed a subject, which I could not hear with patience. We had some conversation, which it is needless to relate, the consequence of which was what you heard."

EVERY day adding to the re-establishment of my health, I was in a short time enabled to visit my French friends, who all seemed to rejoice at seeing me abroad again. Mademoiselle Antoinette, who, to use Mr Garvie's expression, was really a sweet girl, received me with apparent satisfaction, although, I thought, with less liveliness than usual. A transient blush passed across her face as she gave me her hand, saying, with a smile of infinite sweetness,

"*Nous*

“ *Nous sommes heureux de vous voir en vie encore, Monsieur.* We never expected to have seen you again : the accounts we received were truly alarming ; and you know, Monsieur, it was natural for friends and neighbours, such as us, to think often of you. My mother, poor soul, who loves you as her own son, could not allow one day to pass without enquiring after you. *Mais, mon Dieu !* (said she, looking in my face) *quelle change ! vos roses, Monsieur, sont tous évanouis !*—“ They will soon return (said I), Mademoiselle. A few weeks of your sunshine will make them blow again.” Her mother then joining us, inquired particularly after the state of my health, and advised me strongly to go for some weeks to the country. “ *Tu est mieux sans doute* (said she, with a tender solicitude) ; *mais, mon cher enfant ! tu est très foible !* The heats of the town are too great for a speedy recovery ; it must be the refreshing breezes of the mountains that must brace you up, and re-establish your health effectually. We go to our country-house in a
day

day or two (continued she); and I am sure I need not tell Monsieur that it is at all times open for him. Come (said she, taking my hand), what say you, my young friend? I will speak to Monsieur Penguin myself; who, I am sure, cannot refuse so reasonable a request. Perhaps (added she) *Madame* Penguin would have no objection to accompany you. Do you think she would, Monsieur?" I know not whether it proceeded from a slyness which I thought I perceived in *Madame* Bellanger's look as she put the last question; or from the recent domestic events which had agitated our family; or from the broad grin that played on Garvie's countenance; or all these circumstances conjoined;—but I felt the blood mount up to my cheeks: and so completely discomposed was my mind, that a manifest confusion accompanied all my words and actions. *Mais* Antoinnette, who observed every change with the eye of an hawk, seemed not a little discomposed on her part. "*Mon Dieu!*" (exclaimed she) why, Monsieur, your *roses* seem

K

to

to return without any sunshine at all." Garvie's long and immoderate laugh gave me time to recollect myself so far as to observe, that Madame Bellanger's extreme goodness had affected me sensibly, and was a circumstance the most agreeable to me that could possibly happen. I felt myself doubly called upon to return her my grateful acknowledgments——"

"Which circumstance do you mean, Monsieur (said the lively Antoinnette), that of going to the country, or *Madame Penguin's* accompanying you?"—"Upon my soul (said I), Mademoiselle Antoinnette, it is astonishing to me how you can possibly ask the question."—"O, *peutetre!*" (said Antoinnette).

IN our way home, I questioned Garvie as to his having blabbed any thing relative to Penguin's late conduct; who declared positively, that not the smallest circumstance had transpired through him. "And what made you laugh so ridiculously (said I)?"—"Why, at your *countenance* (said Garvie), which, during Ma-
dame

dame Bellanger's address, underwent changes, which, to me who understood the cause, was truly ludicrous. But, by heavens! Mr Mac (said he), you have awakened suspicions in Mademoiselle Antoinette! Should you go to the country, and should Mr Penguin agree to his wife's accompanying you (which I confess I do not expect), I'll be hanged if Mademoiselle does not watch you, my boy!" — "She may watch as much as she pleases (said I), she can detect nothing. But do you think Mr Penguin will agree to my going?" — "He cannot reasonably refuse it (said Garvie), otherwise I have no doubt of his denial; for he is a strange unfeeling fellow, and sickens at every attention paid to any but himself—But we shall soon see: Madame Bellanger will wait on him to-morrow, and, I have no doubt, will plead her cause powerfully."

DURING the remaining part of the evening I took an opportunity to open the country jaunt to Mrs Penguin, who seemed delighted with

the propofal. “But he wont confent to my going (faid ſhe fighing), I am pofitive—and yet (continued ſhe) nothing, I am fure, can be more reasonable. I have been here ſome months, and have ſeen nothing at all of the country, which I am told is charming; and hardly any thing of the inhabitants, who, from every inſtance I have experienced, are kind, hofpitable, and engaging. Madame Bellanger, in particular, is, I think, a moſt amiable woman; and I am fure a few days at her houſe would be ſpent delightfully.” Her lord coming in at the time, put an end to the converſation. He was ſo condeſcending as to aſk after my health, and how I found myſelf after my evening’s walk. During ſupper, I was pleaſed to obſerve a particular attention paid by him to Mrs Penguin, whom he addreſſed repeatedly by the tender appellation of *my love*; and throughout was in a very agreeable humour. She, on her ſide, poor creature, as uſual, returned his tenderneſs with joy and affection; and, like the priſoner of a dungeon, ſeemed delighted

lighted with every glimmering ray of sunshine that occasionally broke through the general gloom that furrounded her.

MADAME BELLANGER took the most effectual method to induce Mr Penguin to consent to my country excursion. She sent for the doctor who had attended me during my illness, and engaged him to represent the necessity of the country air, for ten days or a fortnight, to re-establish my health, which might otherwise suffer by a relapse. To prevent suspicion, she directed him to meet her, as if by accident, at Mr Penguin's store, under the pretext of enquiring after the health of his patient. Mr Penguin was in the store when Madame Bellanger, with her daughter, entered; who, after the usual salutations, turned round to me, and asked me how I did? "*Beaucoup mieux, Madame* (said I), *je vous remercie.*"—"Oui, oui (echoed Penguin), *il est beaucoup mieux!*"—"Beaucoup mieux!" (exclaimed Madame Bellanger)—"Mon Dieu! il est beaucoup réduit!"

pauvre garçon ! En vérité, Monsieur Penguin, il faut envoyer ce jeune homme à la campagne pour quelque tems. It is impossible he can recover in this burning oven ; some weeks in the country would effectually restore him.” — “ *Some weeks* in the country, Madame ! (exclaimed Penguin, with a stare) upon my honour you ladies have a pretty method of disposing of our sick young men. Do you really think (said he, laughing at the extraordinary request), do you really think that we have nothing else to do with our clerks, Madame, than to send them scampering into the country for weeks together every time they are seized with a Guadeloupe fever ? ” — “ Fie ! fie ! Monsieur Penguin, fie ! fie ! (said the good woman, with emotion) how can you talk in this unfeeling manner ? A young creature just escaped from the grave, and reduced to a mere spectre, not to receive *every* assistance to establish his recovery that the place can afford ! He is in a strange land, *pauvre enfant* (said she, with a sigh) ; far removed from the kind attentions
and

and parental care of those whom he has left behind. Must he therefore suffer in a land of strangers for want of proper assistance? *Non, Monsieur, nous sommes François et sans doute souvent vos ennemis.* But we are not the enemies, Monsieur, of the afflicted, the weak, or the broken hearted." The doctor at this moment coming in, the matter was soon determined in my favour. "Very well (said Penguin, with a surly consent), since you think, Doctor, that the country air is so *very* necessary, I have no objection to his trying it for a *week*. But where is he to go, Madame?"—" *Chez moi, Monsieur* (said she eagerly, taking him by the hand, and thanking him for his acquiescence), to my house à la CACHE: *Mais ou'est* Madame Penguin? I have not seen her for a long time; I must have a little chit-chat with her before I go to the country, for I shall not return soon." So saying, Penguin handed her upstairs, leaving me not a little delighted with the success of her negociation.

MADAME

MADAME BELLANGER continued above an hour with Mrs Penguin ; and in passing through the store, on her departure, waved her hand to me, hastily saying, “ *La, tout est réglé. Soyez pret, mon enfant, demain à dix heure de matin.* ” Antoinnette allowed Mr Penguin to hand her mother across the street before she left the store ; and tripping up to the counter where I was, with much archness whispered, “ *Et Madame Penguin nous accompagne. Eh ! Ou sont vbs roses aujourd’hui ?* ” So saying, she run off laughing at my surprise ; not altogether, I believe, unmixed with the roses. “ Charming girl (said Garvie) ! Curse me, Mac, if I don’t envy you ! This jaunt to the country is worth fifty fevers. But hang me if I am not among you next Sunday, if a horse, a mule, or an ass, is to be procured in the place. ” “ But, Good God ! (interrupted I) is it possible Mrs Penguin is to go ? ” — “ O, no ! (said Garvie) it is all a hum of Mademoiselle’s to try your countenance. ” We had no time for farther conversation. Penguin entered the store ; and,

from

from the smiles that played on his dark brow, it was evident that something had given him pleasure.

At dinner nothing material passed; but at supper every thing went on with unusual attention and affection on Penguin's part. "You will pass your time most agreeably in the country, my love, for a few days" (said he). The French, with all their d——d insincerity, are attentive and polite to a fault; and Madame Bellanger is a woman of the first breeding and fashion. I believe, if ever a Frenchwoman had truth and worth, she has both."—"She is indeed a charming creature (said Mrs Penguin); and seems to possess the art of pleasing every body she converses with."—"Yes (said Penguin), she has the happiest way of complimenting, I think, I ever met with. She paid me so many to-day, my dear, on account of my affections as a husband and a father, and told so many anecdotes of what the French ladies said of me, that I was almost out
of

of countenance." (I wonder, thought I to myself, that you are not so at this moment.) "But don't you learn any of their abominable nasty French customs (continued he). With all their politeness and fufs, they are in many respects shockingly disgusting."—"Lord! (said Mrs Penguin) *in what*, my dear?"—"O, in a number of instances (said Penguin). What do you think of their cursed *lavements*? By G—d! it is enough to turn an Englishman's stomach to walk the streets of this town a little before dinner time, and see every window ornamented with a Negro wench flourishing a pipe; which, we all know, she is preparing for her mistress. But why should I talk of Negro girls? (said Penguin) when the very mistress herself will descend from her bedchamber a few minutes before she sits down to table, and, in the hearing of all her guests, were they five hundred, expatiate on the coolness and comfort she experiences from her having just taken a *lavement*."—"And pray, my dear (said Mrs Penguin, with infinite simplicity), what is a
lave-

lavement ?"—“ O, by heavens ! you will soon know that (said her husband), before you are forty-eight hours in Madame Bellanger’s house. But, independent of these customs (continued this hater of French manners), the behaviour of the women, particularly the married ones, before men, is scandalous to a degree. I have seen such liberties permitted, and have heard such indecent *double entendres* uttered by these polite ladies, as would have disgraced a kept mistress. I don’t indeed believe that they are as bad they appear to be ; but, in the eye of an Englishman, their behaviour resembles more that of prostitutes than of modest women. You must take care of yourself, young gentleman (said he, turning to me) ; the French girls will corrupt that modesty of yours, else——”—“ I have perceived nothing hitherto to alarm me, Sir (said I). The French women are indeed lively, but I have seen nothing that borders on indecency.”—“ No ? then you have seen very little of them indeed. But you must not draw conclusions from a *Mademoiselle Antoinnette*,
 who

who is certainly an exception. Besides (said he, giving a significant look to Garvie), girls *in love* are not so apt to be forward when in company with those they admire." Till the age of thirty and upwards, I was so incapable of preserving the least command of countenance, when any thing arch was said to me in company, that the most trifling hint, accompanied by a laugh at my expence, would immediately light up my face into a flame. An alarm void of guilt, a string that continued to vibrate at the gentlest touch, eternally discomposed me, even in the hour of pleasure; and, from time to time, dashed the cup of happiness from my lip. It is therefore almost needless to mention, that Penguin's observation and look, accompanied with Garvie's loud laugh, threw me into utter confusion. I was so vexed, however, at the circumstance, that I could not avoid saying, rather tartly, as I rose from table, "This is some of Mr Garvie's nonsense, I suppose; who pretends to perceive what no body else can."

Br

By the appointed time, next morning, Madame Bellanger's carriage and servants attended to carry Mrs Penguin, her child, and me, to the country; and so attentive was this polite and truly humane woman, that she insisted on *le pauvre malade* taking the vacant seat in the carriage, on account of the heat, while she and her daughter proceeded on horseback to *la Cache*. This delightful spot was about ten miles distant from Port Louis, and situated the most advantageously for the full enjoyment of the beautiful, the romantic, and the sublime. But as it may not be improper to say something of the proprietors, before we proceed to a description of the property, I shall take the liberty to give a short history of Madame Bellanger, her family, and connections; which, during our residence at *la Cache*, I had from her own mouth.

ONE evening, as we were all seated on the sloping bank of a plantain walk, enjoying the refreshing coolness of the shade, and listening

L

to

to the mingled hum of insect, bird, and distant labour, the conversation accidentally turned on a comparison between *European* and *West Indian* scenery. The absence of the fervent heats of the day; the grateful return of the land breeze, which began to indulate gently the leaves of the waving plantain; the murmur of the stream that babbled by our side; and the fresh fragrance of the various fruits, which spontaneously hung clustering around us—all conspired to dispose the mind to enjoy the scene, and produce an eulogium on the superior beauties of a tropical landscape. In the midst of these encomiums, Madame Bellanger, after having listened some time, sighed, and with more emotion than usually accompanied her mildness of demeanour, exclaimed, “*Ah! ma chere Patrie!* O my dear country! when, when shall I behold you again!” The nature and manner of this unexpected exclamation, naturally arrested our attention, and induced us to enquire into the cause. “My dear children (said she), you have been admiring the beauties of
present

present objects, while I have been ruminating on those that are gone. The days which shed a sunshine on youthful pleasures have long since passed away; and those who added a charm to every enjoyment are now mingled with the dust! Our present situation naturally recalled to my mind a train of circumstances, which I have long endeavoured to forget; for a life chequered with a variety of shades yields little pleasure on reflection. A woman turned of forty, Madame Penguin (said she with a smile), experiences little consolation on a retrospect of past events, when every man of gallantry praised her beauty, and every woman of fashion courted her smiles."—"Lord! my dear Mamma (said Antoinnette)! you have often promised to gratify my curiosity by recounting the most material circumstances of your life. The present opportunity is most favourable. Do, pray, indulge me. Monsieur and Madame, I am sure, will take it kind."—"If a variety of unfortunate events, interesting only to the person who experienced them, can afford any

pleasure on recital (said Madame Bellanger), you are heartily welcome to them; and since I am convinced they cannot fail to yield *instruction*, I will not withhold them."

THE HISTORY OF
MADAME BELLANGER.

THE early part of my life I need not trouble you with. As the only daughter of the Count de V——, I received an education suited to the rank of an old and an illustrious family; and at the age of eighteen was accounted (with what justice I shall not say) one of the most accomplished young women of my time. About this period, a crowd of suitors, while they teased me with their professions of love, flattered my vanity with their assiduities. We all love attention, Madame Penguin; and while our hearts remain insensible to tender impressions, they still leap and flutter to the sound of *conquest*. For my own
part,

part, I freely confess, that during three years residence among the most fashionable circles in Paris, I experienced nothing but the love of admiration; and, notwithstanding the joint solicitations of my father and mother to accept of some very advantageous offers, I continued to reject every proposal of marriage till we quitted the metropolis entirely, and retired to our calm and peaceful retreat in the country.

HERE, however, a train of emotions took place, which I fancy we may venture to pronounce the most favourable to strong and lasting impressions. There is something in the very air of rural retirement that disposes the mind to reflection. The incessant whirl of city amusement, where every thing rational, sensible, and exemplary, yields to a giddy and unthinking enjoyment, forms a kind of mental vacuum, where nothing either essentially elegant, or substantially instructive, can exist. Impressions and ideas, like light substances, continually float in air; and as the breeze of folly,

or the gust of dissipation arrives, flutter and disperse, unnoticed and uncollected. In the country, on the contrary, every object tends to inspire the mind with solemn musing, and rational delight. The succession of seasons naturally reminds us of human life; the most important and serious object of our concern. The varied and succeeding charms of nature recal to our constant remembrance the power, beneficence, and wisdom, of HIM, whose hand scatters such beauty and plenty around us. When *Spring* bursts forth in blossoms and in verdure, what proper mind feels not the impression of YOUTH's gay morn? When *Summer*, cloathed in her umbrageous forests, gives shelter and secrecy to her wooing songsters, who feels not the impression of *love*? Even amidst the sober charms of *Autumn*, when luxuriant Nature has executed her task, and a milder lustre softens the scene, who thinks not of that endearing period, when, cured of our tumultuous joys, and all the impetuous passions of our youth, connubial felicity, with the objects

jects of our affection, and social intercourse with the friends of our choice, mellow and mature our enjoyment. It was amidst scenes like these, and with impressions such as I have described (said Madame Bellanger with a sigh), that I first lost a relish for the insipid gaieties of a town; and it was here, alas! where a mind, emancipated from pleasure, and softened by reflection, first felt the true and genuine influence of love!

I HAD been about a twelvemonth at our venerable and delightful seat of Pierpoint; during which period I had, in the course of my daily excursions, become acquainted with every haunt and sequestered walk in its vicinity. My father's family consisted but of myself and a younger brother, at this time educated at Paris; so that, unless it were an occasional visit from some distant neighbours, my companions had principally been my book, my pencil, or my lute. It was in one of these excursions, during a serene evening in the month of
 July,

July, that chance led me to an enchanting retreat on the adjoining property of Mr Beaumarché, which lay contiguous to that of my father. Being fatigued with rambling, I seated myself in a natural grotto of rock, excavated by the wintry torrent; which at this time glided placidly below, murmuring along the bottom of a steep bank, beautifully wooded, and furnished with a winding path from the summit to the base. Confident of the secrecy of a retirement where I had often enjoyed the pleasure of uninterrupted solitude, I indulged myself in the full participation of those innocent raptures which the surrounding scenery inspired. The departing rays of the setting sun had just gilded, with a softened lustre, every object around. The awful grandeur of cliff and venerable pine above; the distant prospect of hamlet, cot, and farm, below; the murmur of the stream, and the universal melody of the grove—all produced a mingled sensation of transport and solemn serenity which I had never experienced before. The thrush, in an adjacent

adjacent thorn, sat singing to his listening mate; and the turtle, in an adjoining thicket, sat wooing his responding love. All Nature seemed to rejoice, and hail with one voice the AUTHOR of their happiness; nor was I the only inanimated warbler of the choir. In the midst of this concert of Nature, and in the height of my enjoyment, I sung a favourite Italian air; and as I seldom went without my lute, I accompanied my voice with that instrument, till the approaching gloom of the evening warned me to depart.

ON my hastening out of the grotto, my astonishment was great on perceiving a man dressed in white standing close to the entrance. My alarm indeed was such, that I shrieked as if I had seen a phantom; but I soon discovered that my fear was occasioned by a most engaging mortal. I shall not entertain you with a minute description; suffice it to say, that among all the fine-finished beaux with whom I had for so long past my time at Paris, I had
never

never seen one who pleased me equal to this elegant stranger; who, to a figure perfectly formed, possessed an expression of feature and a gracefulness of manner truly interesting. On his perceiving my alarm, he politely apologised for his having inadvertently broke in on my retirement. “The beauty of the evening, Madam (said he), induced me to explore this labyrinth; but your own excellence has been the cause of my intrusion. I could not resist the temptation of drawing near to sounds the most sweet and perfect I ever heard in my life. Had I suspected your approach, I should certainly have retired; but I hope (continued he, smiling, and bowing respectfully) that my fault is not so great as to preclude pardon.” During this short address, which was delivered with an ease and elegance truly engaging, I had so far recovered myself, as to treat the circumstance with some degree of jocularly. To have affected reserve and coldness on so trifling an occurrence, would have looked like prudery: to have appeared alarmed in a solitary place

place with a stranger, would have been but a poor compliment paid to my fortitude, and betrayed suspicions which I thought prudent to conceal. But indeed there was little cause for either suspicion or alarm. A behaviour more distant and respectful I could not have wished for from my companion; who, during a pretty long walk homewards, informed me that he had but just arrived from Paris at his uncle's, Mr Beaumarché; that his stay would be only for a few weeks; during which time he hoped that the happy circumstance which had procured him so unexpected an interview, would be the means of producing a further acquaintance. I made no secret of my family and place of abode; and, before parting, assured him, that, after a proper introduction, I made no doubt of my father's readiness to shew a stranger every attention in his power during his residence in our neighbourhood. This I said without hesitation; from a wish to return a civil answer, and from a conviction that the

intro-

introduction I mentioned would be attended with obstructions not easily removed.

I HAVE been the more circumstantial in relating these particulars (said Madame Bellanger); as they open a door to the most material parts of my history. The young gentleman, whom I am about to introduce to your acquaintance, was nephew to Monsieur Beaumarché, our near neighbour; who, of all men, was the most obnoxious to my father. A number of discordant circumstances, from the near vicinity of their properties, had for several years raised a kind of barrier between every social and neighbourly intercourse; which the opulence of the one, and the family consequence of the other, mutually tended to strengthen and increase. The Count, my father, with all his virtues, possessed that proud dignity which a consciousness of his birth and ancestry had implanted in his mind. His neighbour, on the contrary, had been bred a planter; had gone, at an early period, to the
West

West Indies; where, having accumulated a large fortune, and left the management of his concerns abroad to a younger brother, had for some years been in Europe, in possession of the property adjoining to my father's estate. Monsieur Beaumarché, altho' destitute of those engaging manners and elegant attractions which constitute the polite gentleman, and mark the man of fashion, was nevertheless possessed of many excellent qualities. Endowed with plain strong masculine sense, he despised the frippery of polished exterior; possessed of ease, affluence, and a liberal mind, he laughed at the unsubstantial shadows of *title* and *ancestry*; and contented himself with a candid blunt demeanour to all men, however elevated or splendid their station. It may therefore be easily conceived, that two persons, so nearly situated, and so very opposite in their sentiments and manners, could hardly assimilate. The very first interview produced impressions highly repulsive to each; which finally ended in a total estrangement

M

and

and mutual contempt. It was this situation of affairs which induced me to suppose, that every attempt to procure an introduction to the nephew of a man so disagreeable to my father would prove abortive ; nor was I mistaken in my opinion. A week had elapsed without my having heard any thing of young Beaumarché ; when early one morning my maid brought me a letter, which she said had been delivered by an unknown servant, who rode off immediately, saying it required no answer. On opening it, I found it was from my elegant intruder ; regretting, in the most disconsolate terms, the misunderstanding which so effectually precluded him from visiting me at my father's house ; and eagerly intreating another interview that evening in the same place ; where, to use his own words, he had lately been blessed with my society. A short struggle between *prudence* and *inclination* soon gave way to the latter. I had indeed, ever since my interview with this young stranger, experienced a restless inquietude of mind,

mind, till then unknown to me. My daily and my nightly thoughts still turned on the pleasant picture I had lately seen ; and even the certainty of the obstacles which obstructed our acquaintance, only served to quicken the ardour of once more seeing and conversing with a person who had prepossessed me so much in his favour. Secrecy and circumspection, however, were indispensable. I knew my father's sentiments and temper too well to doubt of severity if detected ; but as my constant evening excursions had in a manner sanctioned my absence, I was not without hopes that the interview requested might be granted with perfect safety.

ON repairing to the place appointed (which was the scene of our first interview), I found young Beaumarché waiting anxiously for my arrival. His appearance, although still more engaging if possible than formely, was, however, attended with a change of look and manner which struck me forcibly. In spite of an

assumed cheerfulness, it was evident that something had affected his mind since we last parted. A melancholy hung over him, which obscured, while it softened, the brilliancy of that vivacity which lately brightened his aspect : a pensive thoughtfulness accompanied every word and action, which, while it interested the feelings, gave an additional influence to all he said. When arrived at our favourite grotto, and seated with all the former beauties of object around us, he entreated I would once more favour him with a repetition of the musical air which at first attracted him, and had been the happy means of producing our acquaintance. “ It has dwelt on my mind and vibrated on my ear (said he, with a sigh) ever since I heard it!—it has been my companion by day and by night, and has occasioned sensations which it were in vain for me to describe.” But I shall not tire you (said Madame Bellanger) with a conversation which would be insipid to you, although at the time particularly interesting to me. I shall only, for connection’s sake, mention briefly what
what

what passed relative to his situation in life, his future prospects, and immediate engagements; all which he mentioned with an unpremeditated sincerity, which destroyed every suspicion, and with a pathos and passion which left lasting impressions behind.

His father, as I before observed, had, on the departure of his elder brother from Guadaloupe, been left sole manager of his property in that island; in which property he was jointly concerned. Having acquired an easy independency, and having no child but one son to inherit his fortune, he was desirous of giving him an education suited to his rank and expectations in life: for which purpose, he had, about five years ago, sent him home to receive all the advantages of the metropolis, and to improve himself by travel. Young Beaumarché had but just finished a two years tour through France, Spain, and Italy; and having arrived at an age which requires some eligible and permanent establishment, his father had pressingly written

for his return, which was finally fixed at the distance of only a few weeks. “It is this short period (said he), Mademoiselle de V——, which has induced me to use every method in my power to obtain an introduction to your family; and which having failed to procure, impelled me to solicit this interview, for which obliging condescendence, on your part, I have not words to express my gratitude. All I have to request is, that since our acquaintance has been brought about by so unforeseen, and to me so fortunate, an accident; since it has already yielded me so much pleasure, and since it is to be of such short duration—let me entreat that it may not be interrupted. Do not, Mademoiselle (said he, taking my hand in the most expressive, yet submissive manner), do not deprive me of the happiness of seeing you daily, and enjoying the innocent luxury of your conversation, during my short residence in this country! I know this is a favour I have no title to expect. I am an entire stranger to you; and the unhappy misunderstanding subsisting
between

between the Count your father and my uncle, perhaps may induce you to shun the society of so near a connection. The last idea I cannot prevail on myself to entertain, as it is an injury at once offered to your goodness and your understanding. As to the first obstacle, I am hopeful it will soon be removed. I have been made to understand, that an intimacy and epistolary correspondence subsist between you and my particular friend Madame ——. To her I have already written; and I flatter myself, that by to-morrow morning you will receive, from under her own hand, such intelligence relative to me and my family as will not displease you."

WERE it not for a little prudery, in other words *insincerity*, we women, Madame Penguin, in all likelihood, would succeed less with the men, and become still greater dupes to flattery and deceit. Although nothing could have been more agreeable to me than a compliance with Beaumarché's request, a sense of propriety,

propriety, joined to a secret pride, which should never forsake us, enabled me to reject his entreaties on the score of imprudence, and the risk of incurring a father's displeasure. "I see no absolute harm, Monsieur (said I), in a lady meeting a gentleman of honour and character, and enjoying the innocent pleasure of rational and agreeable conversation in any place ; but, independent of the door which secret interviews with a stranger would unquestionably open for calumny and general criticism, what purpose could such interviews possibly answer between you and me ? You seem perfectly acquainted with the cause which prevents a correspondence and cordiality between our connections. Why, therefore, should we furnish subject for observation to others, displeasure to our friends, and pain to ourselves, merely to indulge an idle and unimportant propensity to enjoy each others company for a week or two ? You certainly have not weighed the consequences annexed to a compliance with your request, otherwise you never would have

have made it. The thing is impossible. *Prudence, propriety, decorum*, forbid it ; nay, every thing is against it."

THESE observations, which I thought unanswerable, produced no other effect on Beaumarché than an increased melancholy and gloom. After a solemn pause of some minutes, his eyes fixed on the ground, and his whole countenance expressive of despondency and affliction, "What slaves ! (said he) what wretched slaves does CUSTOM make of us all ! Here, while bounteous Nature revels in delight, and while universal love and harmony reigns around, are we debarred from the participation of enjoyment, which neither virtue can disapprove, nor innocence condemn, merely because custom has established laws for decorum, and grovelling suspicion awakened sentiments repugnant to every liberal and dignified mind ! And what (said he), after all, do those sage and admirable regulations produce ? Do they make women more virtuous, or men
more

more honourable? Are the first rendered more tender, faithful, and affectionate; or the other more loving, constant, and sincere? Alas! that warbler that sings on the spray to cheer the solitude of his sitting mate; yon turtle that daily cooes fondly in the shade; and the nightingale that, in the absence of his lost companion, mourns nightly through the grove;—may answer the question. CUSTOM never regulated *their* affections; *Slander*, or *Malice*, never checked the ardour of their flame. NATURE, and Nature alone, made *them* tender, faithful, and attentive: but it would seem, that woman, without culture, is incapable of such virtues; or that man is the most treacherous and savage monster of the field!"

"COME, come, my good Sir (said I, willing to conceal the effects which the ardour and dignity of his sentiments had produced), come, come, we must not quarrel with restrictions which experience has established, merely because they may interfere with the temporary objects of
our

our gratification. Institutions of decorum are as necessary to regulate human conduct, as laws to prevent and punish the commission of crimes. If they do not make the virtuous better, they at least tend to prevent the vicious from growing worse.”—“ True, Madam (said Beaumarché); but is it consistent with justice, equity, or reason, to treat the virtuous and the flagitious alike? The infliction of punishment, however mild, is surely authorised by no law till after the crime is committed and proven; but according to the institutions which malice and illiberality establish as the guardians of female virtue, *suspicion* alone is sufficient to constitute the crime; and the jury, without hearing evidence, or examining proof, instantly bring in their verdict GUILTY. How monstrous! how absurd (said he), for instance, are the regulations established in this country for the conduct of women in different stations! Here, while a *married* woman may with impunity indulge in liberties which, I do maintain, are not only scandalously indelicate,

but

but altogether repugnant to the nature of a state where decency and decorum ought invariably to preside ; a young girl dare not, without immediate loss of character, gratify inclinations which, in the eye of reason, virtue, and nature, are harmless and irreproachable. Instead of a behaviour which, on all occasions, ought to mark a preference, and an unmixed affection for the object of her choice, a *married* woman in France proclaims, in the face of the world, her favourites and paramours ; who, at all times, are admitted to her presence, and lay claim to privileges which none but a husband has a title to expect.—They visit her in secret ; they attend her to select parties where a husband's face never appears ; they are admitted to her toilet at the hour she is dressing ; nay, to her bedchamber previous to her getting up ; and all this with the most unblushing familiarity on her part, and without the smallest censure from her fellow-citizens. To reprobate, or to dispute, these shameless practices, would be to raise a whole host of

matrons

matrons against us; and yet a poor affectionate girl cannot take a private walk with the object of her regard, or grant one stolen interview to the man of her heart, without the immediate risk of receiving a stab to her reputation; which, to a delicate and susceptible mind, can never be repaired. No! (said Beaumarché, warmed with the subject) No! it is impossible to defend such barbarous absurdities. CUSTOM has ever been a monster that has tyrannized over reason, justice, and humanity; and, in all its barbarities, it has ever been the most savage and tyrannical to LOVE. I have often bestowed serious thought on this subject; and I have not a doubt remaining, that, so far are these unnatural severities favourable to female virtue and purity of mind, effects diametrically opposite are often the immediate consequence. A young creature, subjected from a certain age to incessant suspicion, and governed by restraint, can never acquire that dignity of mind which springs from conscious rectitude and self applause, grafted

N

on

on the approbation of others. To withhold confidence, is to suspect purity; and that is the most effectual way to undermine it. It debases her in her own opinion, blunts the finer sensations of delicacy and honour, and strips the mind of that elevation and pride which aid and accompany true virtue. But, independent of these, I do maintain, that such unjust and absurd restraints tend materially to injure and destroy the best and brightest ornament of the sex. Unreasonable severities on one side, must necessarily produce *artifice, deceit, and falsehood*, on the other. And what is WOMAN (said Beaumarché, in a solemn tone) without TRUTH? What the fairest face without the heavenly traits of sincerity and candour? Can we clasp such a fancied jewel to our hearts without feeling its coldness and impurity? Can we deposit in such a casket our most precious treasures, for a moment, without trembling for their safety?

“ BUT I mean not (continued Beaumarché),
by

by what I have said, to overturn your sentiments, Mademoiselle, far less to subject you, on my account, to any thing disagreeable, or injurious to your reputation. God forbid I should ! I cannot, however, help observing, that our meeting here, occasionally, is very unlikely to produce the last circumstance. A different path to that by which you return home leads me to my uncle's house ; so that our interviews in this spot can never be suspected by those who may chance to observe our evening or our morning excursions. At all events, you cannot refuse me the satisfaction of knowing if you have heard from my friend Madame ———. I shall therefore hope, at least, for the happiness of seeing you here to-morrow evening at the usual hour." My silence, which proceeded from a total inability to answer such a torrent of passionate eloquence, wearing the semblance, if not of consent, at least of hesitation ; he very artfully precluded an answer, which might have led to farther obstacles, by taking an abrupt departure.

It may well be supposed, that the foregoing doctrine of Beaumarché's was not heard by me with indifference. Whatever were the truths it contained (and I doubt much if the most rigid moral casuist can altogether overturn them), it was principally the manner and manly sentiments of the speaker, that left impressions which I could not obliterate. If this young stranger (said I to myself as I returned pensively home) is not a man of pure principles and honour, he must be one of the first hypocrites on earth.—But it is ungenerous and unkind to suspect him. Every word and look, expressive of his feelings, evince the sincerity of his sentiments. But, alas! (said I, reflecting on his connections and approaching departure from Europe) what are his principles, his looks, or his sentiments, to me! At supper, my father observed my melancholy, and inquired after my health. All night on my pillow did the day's animated scene dwell on my remembrance. All night, till the morning sun broke through my casement, did I struggle

struggle against my inclinations, and seriously examine the impropriety of my late conduct; nor did I drop into slumbers till (convinced of my danger) I determined in my mind not to meet the bewitching youth again. But these, alas! were only the commencement of my inquietudes, afflictions, and broken repose!

THE next morning brought me a letter from Madame ———, who gave me an account of young Beaumarché and his connections which I little expected. His family was noble; but the grandfather, from a train of unfortunate events, having been obliged, about fifty or sixty years back, to dispose of the family estate, had judiciously dropt the idle sound of title, and, establishing himself in the wine business at Bourdeaux, educated his two sons to the profession of merchants. The picture she drew of my young West Indian friend was flattering in an eminent degree. No young gentleman, she said, had ever reflected more honour on his friends, or had given more delight to

his acquaintance. He was respected by the honourable, admired by the generous, and beloved by the humane. His life (said Madame —), young as he is, has been a series of actions dignified and benevolent; while the excellence of his understanding, and the brilliancy of his wit, make his society courted by all, but particularly by our sex. We are about to lose him; and every brow is overclouded on the occasion, for his loss will be irreparable.

THIS letter was a bad cordial to enable me to carry into execution my late determination, to withdraw myself in time from a temptation which I easily perceived was increasing, and which, I plainly foresaw, might lead to consequences at once disagreeable and distressing. But weak and ineffectual are the suggestions of *prudence*, when opposed by *affection*. A temporary struggle may indeed occur; but it is like the resistance of the winds to the waves of the ocean. They may retard, for a short time, their course; but it only serves to raise them

them higher and higher, till, disdaining every obstacle, they break with redoubled violence on the shore ! Such, at least, was my case. Every day produced a new interview ; at every interview affection grew stronger, till love, tenderness, and compassion, rose uncontrolled, and bore down all resistance before them. Reflections, however, and these not of the most pleasant nature, would frequently obtrude, even in the hour of felicity, and poison every enjoyment. Something eternally whispered me, that our interviews, sooner or later, would be discovered, and produce consequences injurious to my character, or destructive of my peace. On these occasions, I seldom failed to remonstrate seriously with Beaumarché on the impropriety and folly of our meetings : but he either reasoned down my objections with his eloquence, or dissipated my apprehensions with his vivacity. My inquietude, however, did not fail to affect a mind like his sensibly ; and, as he contrived every expedient to banish my fears and soothe my agitations, he one morning

ing presented me with the following effusion of his pathetic muse ; which, independent of the passion and sentiment it breathes, conveys such a picture of the writer's mind, that I have ever since kept it as one of the most precious relics of our affection. In saying this, Madame Bellanger pulled out her pocket-book, and read "*La Remonstrance* ;" of which the following, I am afraid, is but a faint and feeble translation.

THE REMONSTRANCE.

" Haste ! haste ! my lov'd LAURA !—away to
the grove,

One evening, enraptur'd, I said ;
Mild beams gild the upland, the mead, and al-
cove,

And melody bursts round the glade !

The lark, with his female, soars warbling on
high ;

The thrush cheers his mate in the dell ;

The

The stream from the mountain foams murmur-
ing by,
While Echo repeats from her cell.

The turtle's fond cooings come soft on the
gale,
With fragrance flung fresh from the thorn;
And soon Philomela will pour her lone wail,
And call her lost lover till morn.

—Haste! join the full chorus with lute and
with song,
Ere eve spreads her mantle of grey;
—Haste! haste! my lov'd warbler—we've tar-
ried too long:
See!—*Vesper* proclaims parting day!"

"Ah, EDMOND! (the fair one replied with a
smile)

How warm! how persuasive thy strain!
'Tis the language of NATURE! (a stranger to
guile)

And Nature should ne'er plead in vain.

If

If with passion so ardent my Edmond can
plead,

When distant from streamlet or grove,
What ! what will he say, when around bower
and mead

All Nature breathes fragrance and love ?

When the *lark* with his consort soars blithe-
some and free ;

When the *thrush* cheers his mate on the
thorn ;

Will my Edmond not envy each pair that we
see,

Unchill'd by cold prudence or scorn ?

When the *turtle* bills fondly, or cooes thro'
the shade,

Wilt thou cease then thy love-melting lay ?
And when Philomel plaintively mourns round
the glade,

Ah ! what will my moralist say ?”

“ O !

O, LOVE ! how bewitching ! how *constant*
thy power !”

(It is thus thou would’st sighing complain)

When present, soft melody fills every bower ;

When absent, ’tis sorrow and pain !

For thee, lonely mourner * ! who pour’st thy
sad lay,

No partner with love beats the wing !

Yet hark ! how yon choristers sport on each
spray ;—

Hark ! hark ! how they flutter and sing !

No sorrow—no plaining, *their* transports annoy ;

’Tis harmony fills all the grove !

No female affects to be distant and coy,

But each chirps the language of love.

Ah ! why then should Nature (sweet nurse of
delight !)

Ah !

* The Nightingale.

Ah ! why should she e'er be suppress'd ?
And why, my lov'd Laura, when transports
excite,
Conceal the best joys of the breast ?"

" 'Tis thus thou would'st reason—thus pen-
sive complain ;
Thus falsely Love's sufferings rehearse ;
For say, when did passion adorn Edmond's
strain,
That Laura was deaf to the verse ?

With thee should I wander the woodlands
among,
And hail the full choir on the spray ;
Enrapt join the concert, with lute and with song,
Till eve spread her mantle of grey.

But, ah ! my false reasoner ! will transports
repel
The shafts that too quickly will wound ?

Will

Will SLANDER's shrill pipe not be heard in
the dell,

When Echo reverb'rates the sound?

Will the dove's cooing murmurs each whif-
per controul,

Falſe—cruel—illiberal, and mean?

Will the warm throb of Nature expand ev'ry
ſoul

Contracted with envy and ſpleen?

No! no, fond declaimer! nor tranſport, nor
youth,

Nor Nature's ſoft mandates avail;

Nor all the mild dictates of virtue and truth,
While cuſtom's ſtern precepts prevail.

For theſe (by inſtancy render'd unkind),

Strict limits have mark'd for the fair;

Cold *prudence* muſt triumph o'er *paſſion* refin'd,
Till Hymen the chaplet prepare.

Alas! does decorum then reſt on a vow?

O

Or

Or modesty spring from a tie ?
Do truth, love, and constancy, dwell on the
bough,
And from *woman* alone do they fly ?

Sing on, then, sweet warblers !—ah ! cease not
the strain !

Go—flutter and bill through the grove !
But talk not, my Edmond, of woman's disdain,
While *Custom's the tyrant of Love !*"

BUT the day now approached when my dear and valued companion was to depart ; and the nearer it approached, the more urgent was he to obtain my consent to make me his for ever. " He claimed not (he said) any thing but the power of calling me his own. He only wished to secure me, previous to his departure, beyond all the chances and risks of Fortune. He had prepared his uncle for the occasion ; who had given his consent, and would himself witness our union. His stay in the West Indies would

would not be for any length of time. Letters which he carried out from his uncle to his father, would finally settle and arrange matters so as to enable him to return to Europe in less than a twelvemonth; and then (said he) should all conciliating measures fail with your father, I shall claim you as my lawful wife in defiance of every opposition. I wish not, my dear Harriette (continued he), to break through the established laws of society; far less to destroy the bonds of duty and filial affection; but *I cannot think* of leaving carelessly behind me such a jewel to be crushed by the unrelenting hand of pride and caprice, or cast upon a polluted soil, where its lustre will never appear." It was now I experienced the effects of a situation which I once foresaw, once dreaded, but could not shun. The thoughts of a clandestine union, without the approbation of my parents, or the knowledge of any of my connections, filled me with horror; and yet the idea of parting from the object of my fondest affections, on whose sincerity and honour I reposed the

utmost confidence, inclined me to bind myself nearer and more firmly to all I held dear and valuable on earth. In short (said Madame Belanger), in a rash moment I yielded consent; and early on the morning preceding the day of his departure, a priest, in the presence of old M. Beaumarché and his wife, united us, in the favourite grotto, for ever.

THE ceremony was hardly over, till I experienced a depression of spirits which I had never before felt, and which I could by no means account for. A cold lifeless torpor seized my heart, chilled every comfort, and deadened every joy. “ *The lark, with his female, soar’d blithesome and free;*” and the turtle, in an adjoining thicket, “ *bill’d fondly, and coo’d through the shade;*” while I remained insensible to love, and seemed stupified with the very event which so lately I so ardently wished for. A mental monitor still told me that I had done wrong; a secret admonisher whispered to me to beware of the consequences. I had, like a thief
in

in the night, clandestinely done what should have met the face of day. I had executed, irrevocably, a deed repugnant to the duty of a child, and ungenerous to the best of parents. These reflections and sensations continued to occupy and distress my mind during my return home through a long and lonely wood, at the outskirts of which I met my father. A gravity, mixed with severity, sat on his brow; and, as he approached me, I thought I perceived an evident suspicion in his eye. "Where have you been, Harriette (said he, with a look that seemed to search my inmost thought)? where have you been so early?"—"Taking my morning's walk, Sir" (said I).—"Your *morning* walks (said he) used not to be so frequent; but of late both your morning and your *evening* walks have been wonderfully regular. But it is near the time of breakfast; go home and prepare it: when it is over, I shall expect some private conversation with you." To a mind impressed with guilt, or impropriety of conduct, every thing is alarming. My father's

O 3

look,

look, manner, and address, convinced me that I had been detected; which occasioned such a tremor, that it was with difficulty I reached home. At breakfast you may be sure appetite was not keen. As soon as it was over, my mother retired, and left me alone with my father; who addressed me nearly in the following terms :

“ I BELIEVE, Harriette, since your earliest remembrance you have found me a kind and an indulgent father. From your infancy, my unwearied endeavours have been applied to the improvement of a mind, where I wished to implant the sentiments of virtue with those of a becoming dignity, and the feelings of true honour with that of a proper pride. It is but justice to say, that in all your conduct you have hitherto amply repaid me for my labours; and the comforts which I have derived from your obedience, virtues, and acquirements, have shed a healing balm on every pain, and given pride and exultation to my heart. Judge, then,

then, how sensibly I must feel should the smallest speck fully the purity of a conduct which till now has remained irreproachable. Judge what tortures I should experience, were any part of your behaviour tinged with levity, meanness, or disgrace.—The purport of this introduction I shall now explain.

“ A YOUNG man for some weeks past has visited these parts, whom I am informed is nephew to that fellow Beaumarché. I have met him occasionally; and it must be confessed that appearance is in his favour, and had he not been connected with such a brute as his uncle, I should have marked him as a gentleman, and as a stranger invited him to my house. I have been informed, that some time ago, you was seen walking on Beaumarché’s property with a gentleman, who, by the description, could have been no other than the person I have mentioned; and I have been further informed, that this happened at a pretty late hour in the evening. It is to obtain full
informa-

information relative to these particulars that I have now demanded this private interview; and I warn you (continued he, with a look of severity), as you value your peace, and dread my displeasure, to beware of a deviation from the strictest veracity."

HAD not the commencement of my father's address (which was kind and affecting) drawn some tears from me, I should not have been able to have spoken at all: these, however, joined with certain circumstances, which induced me to suppose that only *part* of my conduct had been discovered, enabled me to return the following answer; which, though literally true, illustrated but too well Beaumarché's strictures on *duplicity*:

"My being on M. Beaumarché's property, Sir, was merely accidental. The fineness of the evening invited me to extend my walk, farther than I usually do, to the opposite bank, so remarkable for its beauties, and so favourable
for

for retirement. On my return home, I met a young gentleman whom I had never, till that moment, seen, and whom, perhaps, after to-morrow I shall never see again. I knew nothing either of him or his connections; consequently I could have had no premeditated intention of meeting him: and those who have been officious enough to communicate the intelligence, might have been better employed, than in filling your ears with such insignificant circumstances, and your mind with suspicions to my prejudice.”—“And this is *all* (said my father, gravely)?”—“*All!* (said I, with some hesitation) The young gentleman walked and conversed with me till I was out of his uncle’s property, and then left me.”—“And you have never seen him since?”—“Yes (said I), repeatedly.”—“Where (said my father, eagerly)?”—“On his uncle’s property while I was walking on the opposite bank.”—“And who told you (continued my father), that he was to depart hence to-morrow?”—“Himself (said I); he informed me at our first meeting, that his
time

time was limited to a certain day, when he was to leave this country, and sail for the West Indies.”—“ And, pray, how came such minute intelligence to be communicated on so short an acquaintance, Harriette ?”—“ I really do not recollect the circumstances which led to it, Sir (said I), but I presume it is of very little consequence.” My father looked stedfastly in my face for above a minute, and then, without saying a word, got up and walked out of the room.

I COULD not help ruminating on the narrow escape I had made, while a secret compunction told me that I had acted unworthily. Ah! (said I to myself) Beaumarché in this, as in every thing else which regards *honour* and *veracity*, is right! Nothing can be more scandalously mean than subterfuges to gloss over truth and mislead sincerity; and certainly nothing more likely to contaminate and debase the female mind, than a repetition of such artifices! But these reflections continued not long.

The

The evening, which was to put a final close to a delightful and tender intercourse, and which was appointed for our last farewell, dwelt on my mind, and banished every other consideration. At dinner, my father's gravity still continued; his eye seemed to watch my every look and action; and I believe it was but too evident from both that all was not at peace at home. At the hour appointed, I hurried to the place, where I was confident I should meet affliction. As I approached the grotto, a shivering seized me, which nearly bereft me of the power of motion. My faithful and affectionate friend had been waiting with impatience; and running with ardour to meet me, was astonished at the paleness which o'erspread my countenance, and at the lifeless coldness with which I received his caresses. "What is the matter, my love? (said he, with emotion) Whence this trembling, paleness, and dejection?"—"O, Beaumarché! (said I) I know not what it is; but something lies at my heart which overpowers me, and fills me with terror.

I know not what to think of it ; but ever since the ceremony this morning, it has hung heavily upon me ; and something still tells me, either that we shall meet no more, or that some dreadful event is to befall me.”—“ Away with such chimeras (said Beaumarché, clasping me to his bosom) ; it is but the idea of *parting*, my love, that operates on the gentleness of your nature, and fills you with apprehensions. But be comforted, my dearest Harriette ! the time will soon arrive when all these dismal phantoms will vanish, and a sun of happiness break through the gloom that now surrounds you. A few months will soon pass over ; a few months *re-unite and bind us for ever !*” These endearing and reviving sentiments were accompanied with the most passionate embraces ; in the midst of which (Merciful heaven ! I can hardly think of it now without shuddering) who should rush into the grotto but—my FATHER !

My terror and confusion were such, that I remained stupified and immoveable, while circumstances

cumstances occurred that might well have roused me—I remember to have heard my father address Beaumarché by the epithet of *villain*—I remember to have seen them both suddenly leave the grotto—I likewise remember to have heard the clashing of swords; and Beaumarché, with a loud and solemn voice, exclaim, “Hear me, Monsieur le Comte—urge me not to what my heart recoils from;” and yet I remained petrified and immoveable, like the insensible mass of rock on which I sat. How long I continued in this agitated dream I know not; but Beaumarché’s re-entering the grotto, pale and bloody, effectually awakened me. “Run, my dear Harriette (said he hastily); run to your father. His rashness, I much fear, has undone us all! Haste, my love! attend him till I send assistance: you shall soon see me again. In distraction, I flew out of the grotto; (but may no such spectacle ever meet the eye of a daughter!) I found my father, at the distance of some paces, lying on his right side, half raised on his elbow; his face inclined to

P

the

the ground; his left hand placed near his heart; his clothes drenched in blood. On my approach, he raised his head, and giving me a look, which I can never banish from my remembrance, exclaimed, in a languid voice, "*Ah, Harriette! Harriette! Is this the reward of my kindness?*" I had but just strength sufficient to stagger to the dreadful spot, lay my cheek close to his pallid face, and sink senseless by his side. What followed I know not. The first circumstances I recollect were my being in bed in my own apartment, my maid weeping by me, and my mother chafing my temples. A short time disclosed a scene which my recent situation had shut out from me; and which, as soon as my strength and spirits would permit, my mother communicated to the following purport:

My father, on his being carried home by those whom Beaumarché had dispatched to his assistance, and on the surgeon's dressing the wound without pronouncing any thing deci-

five

five relative to the event, addressed his attendants in these words: "As it is uncertain what state of body and mind I may be in a few hours hence, and as I am now enabled to reveal the cause of my present situation, I conceive it but justice to disclose what, if kept secret, might perhaps hereafter affect the life and character of a fellow-creature." He then briefly related, that, impelled by an ungovernable fury, he had first given Beaumarché abusive language, and then insisted on his drawing his sword on the spot: That Beaumarché had repeatedly intreated him to listen for a few moments to what he had to declare, but to no purpose; and that while my father advanced to attack him, Beaumarché continued retreating on the defensive, still urging him, for God's sake, to attend to what he had to communicate: That, in retreating, Beaumarché's foot having encountered the stump of a tree, occasioned him, after staggering a few paces backwards, to fall; and that my father, hastily advancing, and encountering the same obstruction, fell likewise,

and, in his fall, the extended sword of Beaumarché entered his left side near his heart: That when Beaumarché had disengaged himself, and found how matters stood, his conduct (to use my father's own words) was humane, manly, and affecting. "Had I known (said he) as much of this young man previous to this rash action, I might have acted otherwise; but it is now too late to reflect. All I have to add is, that whatever may be the consequence of my imprudence, the fault was all my own; the young man was perfectly innocent."

As my poor father had foreseen, a short time made a very considerable change on both body and mind. A fever, accompanied with delirium, continued for eight days; at the end of which, having recovered the use of his reason, I received a message to attend him. On my entering his chamber, he desired every one but my mother to leave the room; and having seated myself, by his desire, at the side of his bed,

bed, he addressed me nearly in the following words :

“ I have sent for you, Harriette, previous to my dissolution, that you might receive from my own lips a declaration that I die in peace with a child whom I have ever tenderly loved, and to whom, notwithstanding the impropriety of her late conduct, I wish every future happiness. All I have now to intreat is, that you will plainly and candidly relate what has passed between you and the young man who has accidentally been the cause of my present misfortune, as I cannot compose my mind to perfect serenity while an ambiguity hangs over the honour of my family. You have already dealt disingenuously with me ; I hope you will not now, as there is nothing from a dying father you have to fear.” As soon as the excess of grief allowed me utterance, I, without disguise, disclosed every circumstance which had passed between Beaumarché and me, not even concealing our marriage ; and having Madame

———'s letter in my pocket, I took it out and read it, together with one I had likewise received from a near relation of our own, relative to Beaumarché's character and connections. "Read that letter over again" (said my father, meaning Madame ———'s). I did so: at the conclusion of which I heard him, with an elevated and emphatic tone of voice, say, "*Bon!*" After a short pause, he stretched out his hand, and taking mine, with a look expressive of resignation and joy, said, "*I now die in peace; my honour is not tarnished by your conduct, nor my family disgraced by the connection.* Had I known these particulars in time, Harriette, my folly would not have been so great; but I feel the hand of death cold upon me. Farewell! Be kind to each other; and may Almighty God make you both happy!" So saying, he extended his other hand to my mother, and in a few moments breathed his last.

SUCH (said Madame Bellanger, with a flood of tears) was the close of a scene of concealment

ment and duplicity on my part; and such the consequences of a clandestine union, entered into without the knowledge and approbation of those who had cherished me with the utmost tendernefs, and treated me with unremitting indulgence! Let none (continued she, looking at her daughter) imagine that a behaviour so difingenuous can ever be confiftent with filial duty, or agreeable to the dictates of morality. Candour in every part of our own conduct, and confidence in those whom we love and have cause to esteem, are never-failing sources of serenity and pleasure; because, *whatever* may be the consequence, something whispers, even in the hour of disappointment, that we have acted our part with propriety. “But what if parents are altogether unreasonable and rigid (said Mademoiselle Antoinnette).”—“It is then time enough to counteract their severity (said her mother). At all events, young women, whose affections are engaged, are very improper judges of their own conduct. By opening their minds to a parent,

if

if they meet not with their approbation, they will at least hear their objections; and these often are not unworthy of serious attention. But I have already encroached too much on your patience. (said Madame Bellanger): tomorrow I shall resume my narrative, and conclude a series of trials, the remembrance of which are still painful; and which I shall therefore communicate as briefly as the circumstances will admit."

THE next evening, having again repaired to our former situation in the plantain walk, Madame Bellanger resumed her history as follows.

"A few days after the decease of my father, I received a letter from Beaumarché, intimating his immediate departure for the West Indies. Some months after brought me intelligence of his safe arrival at Guadaloupe, and of his determination to return to Europe the moment he arranged matters with his father, and

and was assured he could return with safety. During this dreary interval of separation, I continued close at Pierpoint; my spirits suppressed with the recent calamity of our family; deprived of the only person who could administer comfort and consolation; and brooding over a melancholy train of ideas, arising from an uncertainty of ever beholding the object of my affections again. My poor mother, as may well be supposed, was, of all others, the least qualified to alleviate my sufferings, and dissipate the gloom that hung over me. My brother, on the death of my father, had returned from the university; and although reconciled to my union, and disposed to entertain favourable sentiments of Beaumarché, was nevertheless too young and giddy to afford those soothing attentions which a mind agitated like mine required. Old Beaumarché, indeed, and his lady did every thing in their power to assuage my sufferings, and kindle a hope of future joy and tranquillity in my mind: and as a perfect harmony now subsisted between their family
and

and our's, my residence was principally with the old people at Bellevue; the near vicinity of which to Pierpoint, enabled me to dedicate a daily portion of my time to my mother. But it was not at Bellevue that my heart could experience repose; every object, every haunt, recalled the remembrance of circumstances, which terminated in melancholy, grief, and remorse! If, inadvertently, I struck into any path that led to the grotto of *love* and *death*, I started back with horror and affright. If, accidentally, I encountered the stream, the harbour, or the tree, where tenderness and worth had often detained me till "*Eve spread her mantle of grey*," my sighs and tears burst instantaneously, and left me a victim to sorrow and despair. At length, after twelve tedious melancholy months, the happy period arrived, when the object of all my fond hopes and wishes returned, and flew to my embraces with the transports of undiminished love. As soon as decency and attention to our friends would permit, we left those

those gloomy abodes of former misfortune, and repaired to Paris; where, for two years, we partook of every happiness which agreeable association, easy fortune, and the most perfect affection, could bestow. In this period, our joys were increased by the birth of this young woman who now listens to this melancholy recital. But the joys of life, and their stability (said Madame Bellanger), are generally in proportion to their ardour, and mine were *too* rapturous to last!

AT this time, letters arriving from Beaumarché's father, acquainting him of his declining state of health, and strongly soliciting his presence in Guadaloupe, we prepared for our immediate departure; leaving this young pledge of our love behind for the benefit of her education.

WE arrived but in time to witness my poor father-in-law's decease.—A mournful welcome to these regions, and an ominous preface of the trials that awaited me! M. Beaumarché, on
his

his father's death, took an immediate charge of the valuable properties he left behind him; consisting of two sugar estates, one of coffee, and about 800 Negroes. Being a man of universal benevolence and humanity, his chief attention was directed to the comfort and happiness of those wretched sons and daughters of adversity, whom misfortune had doomed to perpetual slavery. Accustomed to scenes where festivity and freedom had brightened the pastimes of those with whom he had spent his early days on the continent of Europe, he could not behold the fun of liberty set on thousands around him, without sighing for calamity, and endeavouring, by every indulgence, to meliorate their condition, and cheer their hours of captivity. In vain did his managers and neighbours represent the impropriety and danger annexed to a suddenly relaxed system: In vain did his friends intreat him to introduce *gradually* and *imperceptibly* changes which, as they were unusual and unexpected, might otherwise lead to a want of due subordination among the slaves, and prove destructive

destructive, not only to himself, but to the general safety of the community. Beaumarché, impelled by an enthusiasm of humanity, and an indignation flowing from a sense of oppression, despised suggestions, which he considered in no other light than as the sneaking instigations of interest and callous insensibility to the sufferings of the unfortunate. “No! (exclaimed he) it shall *never* be said that I acquiesce in such detestable doctrines. The love of FREEDOM is implanted in every breast; and comfort, relaxation, and mirth, are privileges peculiar to no set of men upon earth. They are the gifts of heaven, to soothe and deaden the pangs of adversity; nor is it the colour of a skin, or the texture of a frame, that can operate to their exclusion. Since destiny, or chance, or whatever it may be called, has doomed these miserables to the wretched lot of bondage on my property, shall I not endeavour to render that bondage as easy as possible? Shall I not try to lighten the chains that weigh

Q

them

them down and gall them to the quick? and shall I not, when the heavy task of labour ceases, make them, by a few comforts, lie down on a bed of repose; and, on the day of relaxation, by a few indulgences, make them rise up to merriment and joy? By the God of JUSTICE and MERCY (said Beaumarché) I will; and, if I err, I am confident that the same justice and mercy will acquit me!"

SUCH were the resolutions of Beaumarché, founded on principles the most generous and benevolent; and these resolutions he carried into immediate execution. Convinced that the usual labour established on sugar properties was too great to insure health, vigour, and spirits to the slave, he remitted two hours daily exertion; namely, one hour in the evening, which enabled the Negroes to prepare their supper in time, and to enjoy a longer, and consequently a more refreshing repose; and half an hour longer at breakfast and at dinner,

ner, as a relaxation from fatigue, and an additional spring to succeeding labour. During these intervals, it was Beaumarché's particular object to light up the Negro mind to cheerfulness; not only to deaden the thought of approaching toil, but to render that toil light-some by the prospect of succeeding comforts. "To hold up an unvaried picture of dreary exertion (said he) is, of all methods, the most effectual to depress the mind, and to plunge it into despondency. To shut out the little joys and pastimes of recreation from those who, alas! have little else to look up to, is to exclude every relief of light from the piece, and to exhibit a successive combination of dark shades, as uninteresting to the eye as it is dismal to the imagination. Let them therefore be happy, poor souls, when they can (said Beaumarché to his managers and overseers); and when the hour of labour commences let them be *busy*: but I will have no cutting and flashing on my property without my immediate knowledge. Punishment must, and shall

be, inflicted for crimes and misdemeanours; but *never* by the wantonness of passion or the caprice of power."

IN addition to these immunities, Beaumarché subjoined the privilege of another day in each week, as a recess from general labour, and as the means of affording the Negro a *complete holiday*. "You give them (said he) Sunday to themselves as a day of rest and recreation; but, pray, how is this accomplished? This is the only day they have to cultivate their grounds, carry their provisions to market, and travel often between twenty and thirty miles before they return with the rewards of their industry. Is this a day of *rest*? can it be called a day of *recreation*? On the contrary, I do maintain, it is one of the most laborious the Negro has in the week. How, then, can he possibly look forward to it as a day of approaching comfort? He shall (except during crop time) have *Saturday* to look after, and arrange, his own little concerns, and Sunday to enjoy

enjoy as he pleases. It may then, with some truth, be said that the Negro once a-week has a *holiday*." This last mark of Beaumarché's philanthropy was the rock he afterwards split upon, and proved the fatal cause of his ruin, and that of all his unhappy connections.—

"That I could have easily predicted (said Mr Penguin, who had joined us a short time before, and who listened attentively to this part of Madame Bellanger's narrative), that I could have easily predicted; for a more wild and imprudent system; I think, I never yet heard of."

"*Pardonnez moi, Monsieur* (said Madame Bellanger); without any partiality to Monsieur Beaumarché, I think I may venture to assert, that, excepting the over indulgence of *two succeeding* days of freedom in the week, which unquestionably was imprudent, every other part of his system was as judicious as it was humane. But I shall hasten to a conclusion, and furnish you with more convincing reasons for my holding this opinion.

FOR nearly twelve months, Beaumarché experienced all the satisfaction which a generous and compassionate mind feels on perceiving the good effects of institutions founded on justice and mercy. His slaves increased daily in strength, health, and cheerfulness; and even his managers and neighbours, while they reprobated the system, were forced to confess that they were the finest looking Negroes in the island. In the meanwhile, every thing went on with alacrity and pleasure. The dance and the song went hand in hand with labour; the sound of the *tom tom* and the *bangah* was nightly heard on the estate; the Sunday was devoted to jollity; and entertainments, such as constitute the Negro's principal delight, generally crowned the weekly toil. But while this excellent man exulted in the increasing happiness and comforts which his benevolence had diffused around him, he little dreamt of the influence which an over-relaxed system had produced on uncultivated minds, destitute of moral virtues, and strangers to the softening ties

ties of gratitude and affection. Had he contented himself with granting a moderate exemption from daily exertion, and allotted a certain portion of time occasionally for the arrangement of the Negro's private concerns, so as to have enabled him to participate of one day's recreation in the week, all might have been well, and his property and slaves have improved under such wise and lenient administration. But by devoting two complete days, immediately succeeding, to the wild ungovernable conduct of a set of beings insatiable in their love for pleasure, and boundless in their enjoyment of it; was laying a foundation for habits inimical to industry, and totally subversive of subordination; and so, when it was too late to apply a remedy, did he, to his fatal experience, find.

INSTEAD of appropriating the time allotted to the cultivation of their grounds, raising their stock and provisions, and carrying them to market, these unhappy votaries to riot and excess

cess thought, at last, of nothing but a gratification of passions originating in savage habits, and grown stronger by daily indulgence. Whole days were consumed in revels; whole nights devoted to intemperance, without intermission or repose. A sudden change in prosperity is too often productive of arrogance among the most civilized nations; can it therefore be supposed that a sudden over indulgence could be productive of good effects on minds uncultivated by ought to enlarge the understanding or humanize the heart? Little philosophy is necessary to enable us to reason justly on this point; yet Beaumarché, with all his philosophy and superior abilities, through the medium of enthusiastic humanity, saw objects indistinctly, and was deceived! While he listened with rapture to the nightly sound of the *bangah* and the *tom tom* on his estate, and indulged himself in the pleasing reflection that the hapless children of bondage were enjoying comforts arising from a melioration of their condition, and burying a recollection of their misfortune

fortune

fortune in the rustic merriment of their hamlet, a very different train of operations was going on; and the very circumstances which he vainly conceived contributed so effectually to the prosperity of his concerns, were the means of dissension, disorder, and final destruction of his property.

THE system of recreation which Monsieur Beaumarché had established on his estate, naturally drew together a concourse of slaves from the adjacent properties every Sunday to *le Moule*. A comparative view of condition as naturally followed, and led to animadversions and murmurs, which may well be supposed could not be favourable to general order or resignation. On the other hand, a constant participation of indulgence was attended with consequences as natural as fatal among those who neither reason with propriety nor act with discretion. From ease, comfort, and recreation, a love of pleasure became the predominant desire. This led to excess; excess to turbulence;

bulence ; and turbulence to *rebellion*. A total disregard to their own concerns, and an unwillingness to execute their usual tasks, were the first symptoms which awakened suspicions in the managers and overseers, and at last roused Monsieur Beaumarché to a sense of danger. He plainly perceived that matters had gone too far, and had continued too long ; that the period of subordination had ceased, and that the dread of punishment was over. The daring demeanour of the Coromantee, and the sullen aspect of the Ebo, told him that they feared not his threats, and disregarded his admonitions. He therefore determined, by one bold step, to intimidate by terror rather than enforce by precept ; and, by the dint of intrepidity, to re-establish subordination, or to perish in the attempt. Having communicated his intentions to his managers and the different white persons on the estate, they prepared themselves accordingly ; and the next morning, at the usual hour of labour, accompanied him to the field.

WHEN

WHEN the slaves were all assembled, Beaumarché, in a firm tone, told them, that, seeing they had made such a bad use of the indulgence and favours granted them, he had determined to reduce them to their former state, until, by their behaviour, they evinced a complete reformation; and that whoever, in future, dared to refuse to execute, or to murmur at his task, should be punished with severity. A Coromantee, the ringleader of rebellion, bold and fierce as the tyger of his country, threw down, in token of disobedience and contempt, the bill he held in his hand; and folding his arms, with a fullen and determined countenance awaited the farther proceedings of his master. Twenty more of the same nation followed the example of their countryman. Beaumarché, prepared for the worst, forgot not his resolutions; and stepping up to the first aggressor, ordered him instantly to take up his bill, and proceed to work on pain of immediate death. “And who is to kill me! (returned this undaunted chief, eyeing his
master

master with ineffable scorn) a *white man*?" —“ *I, villain!* (said Beaumarché, drawing a pistol from his pocket, and presenting it) *I will.*” The savage, enraged but not intimidated, snatched up the bill (not as an instrument of *labour* but of *destruction*), and Beaumarché, seeing no alternative, laid him instantly dead at his foot. The sudden and unexpected fate of their leader, joined to the prompt and vigorous conduct of Beaumarché and his followers (each of whom, with cocked pistols in their hands, denounced similar vengeance on all who dared to rebel), struck a panic into the minds of the most resolute; and, for the time, crushed this premeditated and alarming insurrection. The twenty Coromantees, who had thrown down their bills, were immediately seized, and put in irons for future punishment; and the rest, professing repentance and resignation, proceeded, without murmuring, to the labours of the day.

AFTER a confinement of some days, which
was

was judged necessary to impress on the Negro mind a proper sense of recent transactions, the twenty Coromantees were solemnly brought forth, before all the slaves on the plantation, to receive that punishment publicly, which the nature of crimes so atrocious required. Previously to the infliction, Beaumarché addressed the whole body, not as a harsh and sanguinary tyrant, but as a kind master and a friend. He represented to them, in glowing colours, the peculiar indulgences and comforts he had bestowed upon them since he came among them, and their most ungrateful and unnatural return. He reminded them, that, since his arrival, there had not been one public punishment, and that the crack of the whip had scarcely been heard on the estate; but finding that favours were productive of disorder, and gentleness, of disobedience and rebellion, he was determined to convince them that he could be severe as well as lenient, and just as well as humane. He, therefore, left it to their own choice, whether, by their conduct, they were

R

to

to be treated, in future, as good Negroes, or punished as bad ones. If the last, he assured them, that no behaviour, on their side, however daring or desperate, would ever prevent him, for a moment, from inflicting the most exemplary and rigid punishment ; whereas, on the other hand, no consideration wou'd induce him to withhold favours from the diligent and the deserving ; nor would any thing afford him more sincere pleasure than that of once more restoring to them those indulgences and exemptions they so lately enjoyed. The customary punishment of thirty-nine lashes was then applied ; but, from the fullen fortitude with which they bore it, the managers were not inclined to augur very favourable consequences.

For some time, however, matters went on in the usual routine ; and Beaumarché was at length so much convinced of the thorough reformation of his slaves, that the period was fixed upon, and even promised, for the restoration of all their former indulgences ; with
this

this difference only, that, instead of *Saturday*, Thursday was the day allotted for the arrangement of their own concerns. But these regulations never took place; nor did the period ever arrive, when this kind and benevolent master reaped the rewards which his benevolent and humane system so justly intitled him to. The spirit which a twelvemonth's ease and festivity had kindled, could not be easily extinguished in minds prone to every excess of enjoyment, and become impatient under restraint. Former exemptions, excited no other sensations than the desire to extend the unbounded limits of sensuality; while recent establishments of order, restrictions, and punishments, dwelt incessantly on the mind, and filled the savage soul with bloody and ungovernable revenge.

AT the dead hour of night (may no such ever visit the inhabitants of these isles!) the alarming sound of the plantation shell was heard at a distance; and immediately after, one of the overseers, rushing into our bedchamber,

R 2

brought

brought intelligence, that all our slaves and those of the neighbouring estates were in rebellion, and proceeding to instant destruction. Beaumarché had but just time to seize his arms, and give orders for assembling all the whites and the domestic slaves, when the shell blew at our Negro houses, not a quarter of a mile distant. The first thing Beaumarché attended to, was to intrust me and my infant child to the care of a favourite Mulatto domestic, with instructions to convey us with the utmost secrecy and dispatch to Port Louis, whither, he promised to follow as soon as it was practicable. It is utterly out of the power of language to describe what I suffered at this moment. Losing all sense of my own safety in the apprehension of my husband's danger, I clasped him in a frantic embrace ; and declaring I would not stir without him, implored him, by every expression of love, frenzy, and despair, to accompany me. But with this request he, in a few hurried, though endearing words, assured me, it was utterly impossible for him to comply.

“ If

“ If I abandon my property by flight, my dearest Harriette (said he), inevitable ruin must follow. Their first step, on missing me, would be to pursue, and, in all probability, overtake and sacrifice us to their present fury. By remaining here on the spot, undaunted and armed with my attendants, I shall, at least, be enabled to hear their complaints, and, by promises, ward off immediate destruction, till more effectual means can be procured to crush the insurrection.” This, while he tenderly embraced me, was all he could say. Snatching up his son, then but eighteen months old, in his arms, he hurried me out of the room, half dressed as I was, to a back door, where the Mulatto slave and a horse waited to receive us.

TRAVELLING through deep ravines and solitary woods, we had proceeded by unfrequented paths a few miles from le Moule, when, ascending a steep hill, and hearing my guide exclaim, with astonishment and terror; *Mon*

Dieu ! quel spectacle ! I looked back, and beheld our whole property, houses, works, and plantation, in one blaze. It is needless for me to tell you what my sensations were at that moment. Beaumarché occupied my whole mind ; and had it not been for the remonstrance of my guide, I actually would have returned, and, amidst flames and destruction, ascertained my husband's fate, or have perished in the attempt. The possibility, however, of his having escaped, weighed more with me than any remonstrance or consideration of immediate danger. Arrived at Port Louis, our intelligence spread universal terror and consternation. In a short time multitudes came pouring in from the different adjacent properties ; but neither Beaumarché nor any person from ours were among the number. At length some slaves, who, by skulking among the woods, had escaped the general slaughter, arrived, and narrated a tale which, even at this distance of time, I have not power to recapitulate. Suffice it to say, that, after doing every thing which humanity, prudence,

prudence, and courage, could execute, my dear and ill-fated husband, and all his followers, were massacred, in a manner too shocking for description, by those who had so often tasted his bounty; and who, under a government so liberal and mild, might have enjoyed ease, comfort, and content.

It was many months before general tranquillity was established by a suppression of the revolted slaves. A number of valuable properties were totally destroyed; among which were those of Beaumarché, this coffee plantation excepted; which, from its peculiar situation and distance from the seat of rebellion, happily escaped. During this interval of confusion and alarm, I remained at a friend's house in Port Louis, totally insensible to everything that passed; and, unless it were the charms inseparable from the affections of a fond mother, I may, with truth, assert, that every other enjoyment was a stranger to my breast.

I HAD written home to my uncle an account of my calamity; and having acquainted him, at the same time, with my incapacity to engage in any thing relative to future management, I waited with a patient indifference till he either arrived himself, or deputed some person on the spot, to take charge of the remaining wreck of our fortune. In the interval, however, my friends here were not inactive. As I was, in every respect, by much the greatest sufferer, they exerted themselves warmly in my behalf; and, actuated by the double impulse of commiseration and benevolence, in a very considerable degree, retrieved my affairs from the desperate state in which the recent rebellion had involved them. From the number of revolted Negroes captured, it was judged expedient to make it a general concern; and as a restoration of those to their former residence would, of all plans, have been the most dangerous, it was determined to distribute the revolters in small lots among those whose slaves had escaped infection, and who, on their
side,

side, agreed to exchange an equal number in return. By this judicious and humane regulation, a great many of these unhappy wretches were saved from execution, and the different sufferers considerably indemnified for their recent loss. The good effects of this system was experienced by me in particular; for every person being desirous to contribute to my relief, above 500 choice slaves were, on my uncle's arrival, ready to be employed on his property as soon as matters were in a situation to receive them. This, however, could not be accomplished without considerable time and expence; and my uncle, now advanced in life, and unwilling to embark on new and extensive operations, judged it most advisable to dispose of one estate, reserving the other, well stocked and full handed, for the behoof of his grand-nephew, my sweet little CHARLES, the innocent companion of my sufferings, and soother of my distress.

My uncle's generosity stopt not here. Ob-
serving

-serving my extreme aversion to engage again in transactions which recalled a remembrance of late calamities, and agitated my mind with horror and alarm, he, unknown to me, arranged a plan of operations, which nothing but the best and most benevolent disposition could have suggested. A short time after his arrival, he proposed, by way of exercise and amusement, a short excursion into the country. During our ride, he took occasion to inquire if I had ever seen our little coffee plantation, which (he said) he had some thoughts of keeping? On my answering in the negative, he informed me, that we were little more than a mile from it; and finding I had no objection, we struck suddenly into a path that winded up a steep mountain, through scenes the most romantic and picturesque I had ever beheld.

ON reaching the summit, and observing nothing that announced habitation, I could not help telling my uncle, that his miles were rather long ones. To which he only answered
with

with a smile, not altogether so long as you imagine. As we continued slowly descending, my eye, all at once, was arrested by a picture composed of the most interesting group of rural beauties Nature could well produce. A sloping lawn, overspread with the most vivid verdure, occupied about a mile of a charming valley, interspersed with swelling hills, planted with coffee, adorned with the *cabbage*, the *cocoa-nut*, and the *cotton tree*, in all their towering glory, and surrounded by abrupt cliffs and stupendous mountains, whose unmolested forests seemed to wave their lofty branches in the clouds. In the midst of this romantic retreat stood a simple, though neat, habitation, encircled with the orange tree, the shaddock, and the lime, in fruits and in blossoms. The green banana, waving and rustling to the breeze, gave a real, as well as an imaginary, sense of coolness; while the thick umbrage of the spreading tamarind tree, as you entered, cast a sombre and grateful shade around. The stillness and awful grandeur of the scene gave a double

double effect to the mingled sounds that occasionally caught the ear. A small gang of slaves, with laughter and song, were picking coffee on the surrounding slopes. The roaring of the mountain stream came softened at a distance; while a group of little naked savages ran clamorously sporting before the door. On our approach, I was not a little surprised to find CATON, my trusty mulatto guide, ready to receive us; and on entering the house, my astonishment increased, on perceiving two or three favourite female slaves (whom I formerly conceived had perished in the general wreck) come running up to me, with a mingled expression of joy and sorrow in their countenances, which touched me sensibly. “God blefs you, Missis! (said they all in one voice) God *Amighty* blefs you, good Missis! We once happy wid you, Missis; but Massa—good Massa dead!—we neba be happy no more!” My tears were all the answer I could give to these kind and mournful salutations: and my uncle perceiving my affliction, conducted me to a neat hall,
hand-

handsomely furnished ; where, having called for some wine, he changed the conversation, by enquiring after M. Bellanger. “ And what have you got for dinner, Quashiba (said my uncle) ? ” — “ Me have got peppa pot, Massa (said old Quashiba) — Me know Missis love em — Me have got craw-fish and mountain mullet fresh from de riva — One fine nounge kid be kill this morning, Massa — and me have nice fat capon at de fia. ” — “ Bravo ! (said my uncle, laughing) M. Bellanger, I find, lives like a prince ; and your mistress and I will dine with him to-day, Quashiba. ” — “ God bless you, Massa ! (said Quashiba) me go make ting ready. ” My uncle then informed me that M. Bellanger was the gentleman who superintended the property. “ He has been here (said he) above ten years ; during which time he has, in every respect, given me much reason to be pleased with his conduct. Independently of great worth and modesty, he has a thorough knowledge of the treatment of the slaves, who all adore him, and who, since his residence here, have, in con-

S

sequence

sequence of his judicious treatment, increased nearly one half. He has felt the crushing hand of misfortune, poor man! (said my uncle) as well as others; and as he is a gentleman by birth, manners, and education, I have placed him here, in a situation which is not disadvantageous, and with which he is perfectly satisfied. You see he is a man of taste by the neatness and *propreté* of every thing around him. The house, indeed, is much larger than he has any occasion for; but as my brother and I loved the man, we allowed him to act, in every respect, according to his own fancy; and I am really charmed with the improvements he has made since my absence. In the evening we will take a walk, and explore more minutely the beauties of this little spot; which, I assure you, are not few. M. Bellanger can furnish us with excellent beds; and I cannot help thinking (said my uncle), that you will sleep fully as comfortably here as in the burning town of Port Louis.

FOR

FOR the first time, during six months, I sat down to a repast, where comfort, serenity, and peace, presided. There was something in the whole of this day's entertainment that operated on my mind sensibly; something that mitigated my pains, soothed my melancholy, and poured a healing balm into a wounded spirit. The novelty and unexpected beauty of the place; the quiet, content, and apparent happiness, that seemed to reign every where around; the interview with those whom I never expected to have seen, and who all vied with each other in rendering me offices of kindness; the cheerfulness and hilarity of my good uncle's conversation, joined to the mild, sensible, and engaging manners of M. Bellanger—all conspired to deaden the poignancy of recent affliction, and dispose the wearied wo-worn mind to resignation and repose.

IN the evening my uncle, during the influence of a refreshing breeze, led me through a variety of scenery, new, interesting, and delightful.

lightful. The hour of labour had just ceased, and the slaves were returning, with merriment and joy, each to their respective home, to prepare their supper; the Negro's chief and favourite repast. The departing rays of the setting sun, faintly gilded with a softened light the tops of the surrounding mountains, leaving a reviving coolness in the valley below; where the orange, the lemon, the pimento, and the lime, scattered their rich and united fragrance. The brightning verdure of the Guinea-grass pasture, sweetly contrasted the plantain walks deeper green; the stream rolled babbling thro' the banana grove; and, ever and anon, the shaggy goats, that brouzed along the neighbouring rocks, in tender responses answered to their complaining younglings below. But why (said Madame Bellanger) need I describe what you all hear and see at this moment? In this identical plantain walk where we now sit, my uncle, perceiving the increasing pleasure I experienced from an assemblage of objects at once peaceful, picturesque, and sublime, asked
me

me what I thought of M. Bellanger's situation? "I think, Sir (said I), it is perfect paradise: never did I behold any more completely to my taste."—"It is rather retired (said my uncle, with seeming indifference), and will therefore, by many, be considered sombre and dull."—"The *retirement* (said I) is to me one of its principal attractions. The glare and bustle of the world are calculated only for the happy, the busy, or the gay; but to those who have experienced adversity, and from whom the essential sources of enjoyment are for ever dried up, a retreat from general amusement must be a relief; and a security from intrusion, a charm: at least (said I, with tears) they are so to me."—"My dear Harriette (said my uncle, taking me kindly by the hand), I rejoice to hear these sentiments. My scheme, I perceive, has succeeded to my wish; for, to be plain with you, my motive in bringing you hither, was no other than to sound your inclinations relative to your making this spot your future place of residence. Having now ar-

arranged matters so as to be enabled to return and pass the remainder of my days in Europe, I mean to shake myself free of all West Indian concerns, and content myself with the fortune I have already acquired ; which, thank God, is amply sufficient. For this purpose, it is my intention, previously to my departure, to make over the whole of the remaining property, now well stocked and prepared for future improvement, to your infant son : and it rests with you, as a mother and a friend, to render this effectual, by superintending it till he arrive at an age when, with propriety, he can take care of it himself. In the intermediate time, your residence here will be suited to your inclinations ; and, through the assistance of M. Belanger, every thing conducted with ease and tranquillity. I have prepared him for the event ; and, I am persuaded, nothing will be wanting on his part to advance your interest, and render your situation agreeable. The present plantation, as it now stands, with the slaves and every thing pertaining to it, I shall assign

assign over to you and your daughter, my sweet Antoinnette, whom I love with the affection of a father, and to whose education my best and unwearied attentions shall be dedicated. Till this is accomplished, your time here can neither be unpleasant nor unprofitable. It will be chiefly occupied in the agreeable office of an instructor to your young son, and as a guardian of those properties which, at a future period, will devolve to each of your children. Add to this, that by the time education calls one home, the other will be restored to you with every improvement to sweeten your retirement, by the possession of an accomplished companion, to enliven your society, and a confident to soothe and solace your distress.

IT is unnecessary, I presume, to remark, that an address so kind, liberal, and affectionate, filled me with gratitude and esteem, and that the result of my uncle's humanity was my immediate retreat hither. I have now resided in this peaceful retirement about fifteen years; during

during which time I have experienced increasing pleasure; while Time, the grand deadener of affliction, has, in a great measure, softened the acuteness of former distress. One of the principal sources of my happiness has been the growing prosperity of those immediately under my protection; and by the admirable management and assistance of M. Bellanger, who has gone hand in hand with me in all my plans, we have happily established a system which, to every mind endowed with humanity, must afford real and substantial pleasure. From thirty slaves, which, exclusively of a few domestics, were all the Negroes on the plantation when I arrived, the number has now increased to fifty-five. But this (said Madame Bellanger) is a small consideration, when we reflect that all these are surrounded with comforts; are regular, decent, and orderly, in their conduct; kind to one another; and so attached to me, and pleased with their condition, that they prefer it to absolute *freedom*; an offer which they have repeatedly refused. “ God preserve us!

us! (said Penguin, who listened attentively to this last part of the narrative) God preserve us, *Madame!* this is wonderful indeed! How, in the name of necromancy, have you performed such miracles, and produced a revolution in the Negro mind which was never before heard of?"—"The revolution is not so miraculous (said Madame Bellanger), when circumstances are duly attended to. I shall indeed confess, that what I have happily accomplished could not be practicable *every where*; but my situation being peculiarly favourable, I availed myself of the opportunity to introduce a *new mode of treatment*: the particulars of which I shall now explain.

THE condition of the Negro, not only with regard to mere slavery, but to the various miseries annexed to a state of savage and unsocial barbarism, had often struck my mind forcibly, and as often induced me to investigate the cause, with a view to remedy the evil. The more I examined, and the longer I reasoned
on

on this subject, the more was I convinced, that the principal source of calamity was a total neglect of institutions, calculated to wean the mind insensibly from habits of *intemperance*, and make it enamoured of *social and domestic peace*. Could I only convince these poor creatures (said I), that they would gain more by kind and uniform attention to one another, than by a gratification of temporary and precarious indulgence, much might be done. Those unhappy jars and perpetual animosities, which disturb and destroy tranquillity, might cease; and, instead of hatred and dissension, very different consequences ensue. Marriage, properly established between the parties, I well knew was, of all other methods, the most likely to check irregularity, and produce general union: but marriage, without something to render it binding, solemn, and attractive, was next to nothing. A sense of *decency* was first to be implanted, before conjugal fidelity could even be *understood*; and an impression of modesty, justice, and attachment, made on the
unreasoning

unreasoning mind, before either shame could attend turpitude, or conscious rectitude spring from decorum. To have attempted this by *precept*, would have been as ridiculous as ineffectual; but as interest never fails to operate in all situations, and as every thing conspired to favour the attempt, I communicated my plan to M. Bellanger; who, heartily approving of it, engaged to contribute, by every means in his power, to carry it into execution.

My Negroes, it must be observed, were few in number, and these all chosen and valuable slaves. Their place of residence likewise was so remote and completely separated from other properties, that little or no intercourse, and consequently few bad examples, could operate to counteract the effects of good institutions. But what I considered as one of the greatest advantages, was the males and females being nearly equal in number; and, except three or four old Creoles, none above the age of thirty. Thus situated, my preliminary steps towards a
general

general reformation of manners was, first to encourage marriage, and then to render it as binding and lasting as possible. This I attempted, by leaving every one to their own choice, and having the ceremony performed by M. Bellanger with solemnity before me, and invariably in the presence of all the slaves on the plantation, to whom I gave a marriage feast, instituted for the occasion. These ceremonies were always accompanied with donations and advantages to the parties, with promises of additional favours for an adherence to conjugal duty, and with denunciations of punishment and disgrace for the smallest infringement of fidelity. *Ne riez pas*, Monsieur Penguin (said Madame Bellanger); do not laugh. I am convinced, from long experience, that a neglect of these essential duties is the grand cause, not only of all the Negro's misconduct, but of our subsequent misfortune. Let us only for a moment reflect what would be the consequence among ourselves were we reduced to similar situations. If every man
had

had as many wives, and these as many husbands, as the Negroes, where should we look for honour or attachment on one side ; or modesty, fidelity, or love on the other ? Would not all be envy, rage, and uproar, as it too often is among them ? But, exclusively of every other consideration, how can we ever expect an increase of *population* amidst such unrestrained and scandalous irregularity ? How look for attention and affection among parents, when no parent feels the tie ? Can the husband clasp his reputed offspring to his heart, when he knows not who is the father ? Can the mother watch over and nurture with tenderness her infant charge, when she sees no parent who claims it as his own, feels for its wants, or provides for its necessities ? Impossible ! Yet such is the real state of matters among the ill-fated Negroes ; the fatal consequences of which are in these islands yearly and daily but too evident. While population is unattended to, *importation* necessarily must follow. A fresh succession of ignorant, and,

T

for

for some time, useless wretches, torn from their country and friends, poured in upon us to supply deficiencies; and ere they can be serviceable to us, or useful to themselves, exposed to a variety of sufferings, which, by attention and perseverance on our parts, might be greatly prevented.”—“ And did you experience no difficulties in establishing this system of *matrimonial fidelity* ?” (said Penguin with a sneer)—“ *Many* (said Madame Bellanger). It was of all other tasks the most arduous I had to encounter.”—“ I believe so” (said Penguin, exultingly).—“ Perseverance, however, and, let me add, a little severity, at last prevailed (said Madame Bellanger). Corporal punishment I ever disliked; it degrades, depresses, and hardens, the mind; and, unless for the commission of crimes altogether atrocious or dangerous, I have generally laid it aside. The mode I adopted, on the present occasion, to repress vice and punish disobedience, I have reason to think, was much more effectual.—I shall briefly mention it.

As

As a general encouragement to marriage, and as an inducement to an implicit adherence to its laws, I indulged the parties with an additional day of recreation in every month; and as a farther mark of my favour, I, on the evening of the same day, established an entertainment or little festival, partly as a commemoration of matrimonial union, and partly as an example of cheerfulness, joined with the utmost regularity and temperance. I likewise made a practice of visiting often the houses of the new married pair, enquiring particularly after their little concerns and comforts; and while I examined their hogsties, poultry, provisions, furniture, and articles of apparel, as proofs of my approbation, and as an encouragement to future industry, I used generally to leave some marks of my bounty behind me. These gratifications and peculiar attentions, which (leaving gratitude out of consideration) operate powerfully on the Negro mind, were all withheld from the *unmarried*, and instantly withdrawn from the infringers of matrimonial

peace and decorum. The day allotted for *recreation* was to them a day of *labour*; the hours of festivity, dance, and merry-making, were to them the hours of solitude, dejection, and mental pain. Add to this, that while a growing prosperity attended the meritorious, a stationary and depressing penury accompanied the bad. The bounty, the kind attentions, the presence, and the smiles of their mistresses, no longer decorated their little cabins, ornamented their persons, or cherished their hearts; the happiness and cheerful looks of their fellow-labourers eternally met their eye; the taunts and scoffs of the unfeeling perpetually wounded their ear. All was unprofitable, sad, and insupportable; till, urged by necessity, and overcome by remorse, they used frequently to watch an opportunity, throw themselves on their knees before me, and, with tears and lamentations, exclaim, "*O Missis, me bad Nega! Make me good; me neba be bad no more!*"

It was by such methods as these (said Madam
dame

dame Bellanger) that I at length conquered the obstinacy of habitual intemperance; broke down the barriers to domestic harmony, and weaned the savage mind from scenes of irregularity, to order, industry, and content. I must, however, confess, that before this was accomplished, I experienced much trouble and repeated vexation: and such is the extreme perverseness, and such the natural propensities of this turbulent creature, that, to render my system effectual and permanent, I was forced to dispose of some of the most incorrigible, although otherwise the most valuable Negroes in my possession, in order to preserve the rest from infection. I have now, for some years, reaped the fruits of my labours. While I perceive my property in slaves yearly increase, I have the double consolation of seeing these yearly improve in morals and advance in prosperity. My young Negroes have been all brought up under my own eye; and, next to the joys of maternal love, I declare, before God, that of all the other circumstances an-

nexed to my situation, that of attending to the instruction and comfort of these little wretches, has afforded me the most heartfelt delight. These I have educated in the principles of our religion; and as the piety and excellent qualities of M. Bellanger were admirably calculated for the task, he, at my request, has acted for some years as general pastor to the whole flock. In a short time you will hear, and, if you incline, see them all at vespers; a ceremony regularly performed every evening, together with matins, and a short moral discourse, delivered by Monsieur Bellanger every Sunday morning. I am not (said Madame Bellanger, on seeing Penguin smile contemptuously) enthusiast enough to think that I can make all my Negroes *good Catholics*; far less do I suppose that the principles of our faith can be instilled effectually into the uncultivated minds of a rude multitude imported from the coasts of Africa. But it has ever been my opinion, that before moral precepts can be inculcated, or vicious habits overcome, **EXAMPLE** must
first

first take the lead; and that *no* example can be effectual without a previous conviction in the minds of the instructed, that the instructors are governed by the pure influence of justice, mercy, and truth: an impression not to be made on the ignorant and unthinking part of mankind, if the external appearance of PIETY is totally neglected. There are few minds so completely rude, as to be insensible to some kind of devotion; no description of people, however savage, but who have some object of adoration, to whom they look up for help in the day of necessity, praise in the hour of delivery, or invoke on the ratification of any thing solemn and binding between man and man. To throw therefore the appearance of piety aside, or to neglect those external marks which never fail to operate upon the human mind, is, in fact, to conceal, amidst all the beauty of moral rectitude, and all the precepts of exemplary duty, an object the most luminous and attractive to allure, enlighten, and guide, the darkened multitude to the paths of virtue.

virtue. I have therefore (concluded Madame Bellanger) made it an *invariable* rule, to present to the Negro mind something *superior* to morals, in order to bring these more effectually into practice. I have instituted regular devotion among ourselves, to impress a thorough conviction of our sincerity and worth on the slave; and while I have thus accompanied *good works* with solemn observances, the progress which my young disciples have made, leave no doubt remaining, that my institution has materially tended to a general reformation of manners among them. But it is now near the hour of vespers, and I must attend my charge. Is it agreeable to you (said Madame Bellanger, with a benignant smile) to accompany me, and witness the truth of my assertion?"

END OF MADAME BELLANGER'S HISTORY.

MADAME

MADAME BELLANGER having ended her interesting narrative, we readily accepted of her invitation, and accompanied her to vespers. The spot destined for the performance of this nightly duty was the back yard of the dwelling-house; in the centre of which stood a large tamarind tree, whose shade gave an additional solemnity to the scene which was about to be performed. Under this tree, on our arrival, we found all the Negroes assembled, ranged in rows, and kneeling in a devout and orderly manner. A piazza or back gallery to the house, which rose about eight or ten steps from the ground, was occupied by M. Bellanger, Madame Bellanger, her daughter, and the domestic slaves; and which, from its situation, was extremely well calculated for exhibiting that fervour of devotion, so particularly displayed by the pastor and proprietor during the whole service. I was altogether surprised at the propriety, decency, and correctness of those, whose situation and habits naturally predisposed me to expect something very different.

All

All was attention, decorum, and devotion. The responses and accompaniments were performed with the utmost exactness; and as a musical ear is almost inseparable from the Negro, every tone was in perfect unison; every cadence in harmony. In my life I never heard a concert that came so home to my heart! I looked at Mrs Penguin, and found her eyes swimming in rapture: I gave a glance to her husband, whose fullness even evinced satisfaction.

WHEN the service, which lasted about half an hour, was over, Madame Bellanger stepped forward to the front of the gallery, and addressed her sable audience in the following words: “My good *Negroes*! you have now offered up your thanks to your Maker for the benefits which his mercy bestows on you daily. Blessed are they who maintain his laws by doing good actions to one another; observing decency, order, and sobriety, and a cheerful obedience to their superiors, who will always take pleasure in rewarding

warding their good conduct.—This is the *Marriage feast*.—Go, my good Negroes ! go, be happy and be orderly ; and remember, that your Mistrefs first gave it to make you *kind husbands, loving wives, affectionate parents, and dutiful children* ; and that as long as you continue such, you shall never want the Marriage supper !”—“ *God Almighty bless you, good Miss !*” was the general and clamorous answer.

IN an instant all was rapture and tumultuous joy. The instruments of music sounded to the charge—the circle was formed—the dancers took their station in the centre—fifty voices rose in wild unison ; while the bangah, the tom tom, and the clapping of hands, accompanied the general chorus. At nine o'clock the dance ceased ; and was immediately succeeded by a good supper, suited to the Negro palate, and, for additional comfort, served up in a detached house, where each could enjoy the freedom of the feast unrestrained by the presence of his superior. A draught of generous beer

beer and a dram were distributed to every grown person : a bottle of good punch crowned the banquet. At ten, precisely, M. Bellanger's entrance was the signal for departure ; when this joyous and happy assembly broke up, and, singing, laughing, and contented, repaired to their home and repose.

NEXT morning, at breakfast, we could not avoid jointly complimenting Madame Bellanger on the uncommon effects which her admirable and humane institution had produced. For my own part, I was such an enthusiast on the subject, that I could hardly talk or think of any thing else. “ Is it your opinion (said I), Madame Bellanger, that any such plan as that which you have established could be *generally* adopted, or similar consequences *generally* produced ? ” Penguin gave me one of his *pleasant* smiles. I would fain hope (said Madame Bellanger) that, at some future period, it might ; and yet (continued she), from the knowledge and experience I have had of
Negro

Negro habits and dispositions, I am forced to confess that I have my doubts. I have already specified the very favourable causes which enabled me to introduce innovations in general practice, and bring my system to perfection; not to mention the local advantages of retirement and distant vicinity, which I consider of great consequence. The qualities of my slaves (who were all picked and selected), together with the smallness of their number, are circumstances rarely conjoined, and consequently seldom to be expected. Many of my Negroes likewise were Creoles, brought up as domestics under the eye of Europeans from their infancy; and the few who were advanced in life, were not only eminent for their superior conduct and experience, but placed in situations calculated to present an example to the rest; and by the comforts and wealth they possessed, to impress a sense of the advantages arising from industry: the surest hold we can have of the Negro, and the most effectual charm to attach him to the soil. But what I consider as the

chief cause of my reform (said Madame Bellanger), was the possession of such a person as Mr Bellanger; who, exclusive of the justice, benevolence, and inflexible integrity, which uniformly accompanied his administration, exhibited in his whole demeanour such a daily picture of mild piety, temperance, and regularity, as could not fail to stamp on the minds of the most insensible, something deeper than the impressions of SUPERIORITY and COMMAND. Yet, notwithstanding *all* these advantages, and they certainly are great, you have heard how difficult it was for me to effectuate my purpose; and that before I could produce a general adherence to order, decency, and moderation, I was forced to part with some of the most valuable slaves in my possession.

“BUT I hope, Madame (said I, with much simplicity), that what you have done will induce others to follow your example, and effect a general reformation.” At this remark, Penguin burst out into a loud laugh; and giving me a
super-

supercilious look, peculiar to him, said, "What the devil, Sir! are you simple enough to think, that what Madame Bellanger has, with such difficulty, accomplished here in fifteen years with thirty or forty slaves, can be done with thirty or forty thousand? Is a manager, or the proprietor of an estate, to give *dances* and *marriage festivals* every month to four or five hundred Negroes, among whom as many hundred vices predominate? Or is it to be hoped, that a savage assemblage of new Negroes from Africa are to be influenced by the ties of *religion, morality, decency*, and all these fine things, the same as a few choice slaves, almost all natives, and tutored with the care and kindness of children? No, no, by Jove! If we mean to succeed, and wish to preserve our throats from being cut, we must pursue very different methods indeed. Instead of *feasts*, we must impress *fear*; instead of *indulgencies*, we must attend to *discipline*. Nothing agrees with this infernal turbulent animal so much as strict subordination; nothing keeps down his cursed

passions so effectually as *flogging*.”—“ Ah ! exclaimed Madame Bellanger, with infinite disgust) *Vous Anglois sont cruel !*”—“ Thank you, Madame (said Penguin); but if we are cruel, your favourite and admired children oblige us to be so; for experience, which I take to be better than *theory*, tells us that it is absolutely necessary.”—“ I deny it (said Madame Bellanger), for without theory I have produced *proofs* to the contrary.”—“ Come, come, Madame ! (said Penguin) we are not to be led away by a particular instance. You have had fifteen years experience of choice slaves; I have had near double that experience of very ordinary ones. We shall allow you every degree of merit for what you have accomplished; nay, I freely confess, that what I have seen has not only pleased but astonished me. The system you have adopted is admirable; but it can never be a *general* one: the thing is impossible.”—“ Why ?” (said Madame Bellanger)—“ Because it is *impracticable* (said Penguin); and this, to every person generally acquainted

acquainted with the nature of West Indian property, is apparent. Your Negroes, my dear Madam, may be said to be a family nurtured and brought up under your own eye, where the wants, the vices, and the virtues, of each individual are watched, detected, and attended to, the instant they appear. But will any person of experience gravely assert, that this can be done on an estate where there are ten times the number of slaves, composed of various tribes, manners, habits, and dispositions? To effect such would require for every manager we have, *ten*; and for every overseer, *twenty*. But even admitting we *could* ascertain such important facts, how are we to apply remedies for each disease? After we have minutely investigated character, so as to enable us to form a just idea of the peculiar faults and excellencies of each, how are we to render the general mass pure? how are we to prevent contamination? Are we to separate the sheep from the goats, as you have done, by disposing of the bad to preserve the good from infection?

Were this mode generally adopted, I am afraid, Madame, we should have very few Negroes remaining to cultivate our properties. I mean not to shock you by saying any thing harsh or illiberal; but with all your partialities, you must allow that, in the present state of the Negro, there are many things ingrafted on his nature so incorrigibly bad and provokingly perverse, as to blast and destroy the few fruits and blossoms which occasionally appear. Their tempers and dispositions ——”

“ I SHALL readily allow (interrupted Madame Bellanger), that there are many unamiable and harsh traits in the Negro character; but what has been done on *our part* to render them a better, a wiser, or a more amiable people? Has one step been taken to polish the ruggedness of their nature?—has a single method been tried to soften the ferocity of their passions, or soothe the asperity of a condition, rendered irritable by bondage, and hardened by despair?—has the hand of benevolence

lence been ever stretched out, to assure them they would be cherished or protected from oppression?—has the tear of commiseration been ever shed, to tell them that we feel for calamities which we cannot remove?—Oh, Monsieur Penguin, Monsieur Penguin (exclaimed the good Madame Bellanger, warmed with the subject), tell me not of specks and tints in the *Negro* character, where there are such dark and dismal shades in *our own*! Let us first rectify our own ways, before we arraign the conduct of others; let us first show an example of virtue, moderation, and justice, among ourselves, before we condemn crimes arising from ignorance and habit; crimes which are doubly rivetted by our own shameless vices and unblushing enormities.”—“What are these, Madame” (said Penguin).—“*What are they!*” (said Madame Bellanger) they are too many. Among us here, I have heard and seen too much to convince me, that a scandalous neglect of morals is every where exhibited to the eye of those whom we have the impu-

dence

dence to condemn for vice and irregularity; and if what has been said of *your* islands be true, the *example* must still be worse.”—“ For heaven’s sake (said Penguin) let us hear what these horrid crimes and misdemeanours are.”

“ MONSIEUR PENGUIN (said Madame Bellanger, gravely), I hope you will believe me incapable of making invidious comparisons between nations; but since you have forced this subject upon me, I shall freely communicate what I have heard relative to the conduct of the English in the different islands; and as freely deliver my sentiments on the consequences. If I have been wrong informed, you will set me right; for I wish not to disgrace my arguments by prejudice, far less to support them by error. In the first place, Monsieur Penguin, I have been told, that, in all your islands, the CLERGY are not only worthless but abandoned.”—“ O, by heavens! I can say very little for *them*” (said Penguin.—“ *Eh bien* (said Madame Bellanger)—I am likewise informed, Monsieur,

Monfieur, that the confequences of this admirable example in your *paftors* are evident in the conduct of the general inhabitants, with regard to *religious obfervances*; and if we may be allowed (faid ſhe, with a ſmile) to judge of the whole by the few we have here among us, I ſhould ſuppoſe that your churches are not generally *over-crowded*.” Penguin remained ſilent. “In the next place, Monfieur, I have been informed, that, on the whole, your ſlaves are much leſs happy than ours; that is to ſay, that, while you impoſe the ſame hardſhips, you interſperſe not (if I may uſe the expreſſion) the ſame comforts to render thoſe hardſhips more ſupportable; that, while your puniſhments are equally ſevere for crimes, your rewards and indulgences are not equally benevolent to recompenſe and encourage virtue; that, while the command and the frown of ſeverity are kept-up to deter the ſmile of approbation, the tribute of applauſe, and even the relaxation of kind and familiar converſation, are too often withheld.”—“We do not make *compa-*
nions

nions of them as the French do (said Penguin), I must confess."—"I understand you perfectly (said Madame Bellanger, nodding her head); but we shall wave this discussion, and proceed to what I conceive of much greater consequence.

You have already admitted that your clergy are extremely bad; that a *regular* and *general* attention to religious duty is neglected throughout your islands: let me now ask you, Sir, what is the general conduct of your managers, overseers, attorneys, and even proprietors of estates, with regard to that *delicate intercourse* betwixt the sexes, so conspicuously notorious here?"—"Much the same, I suppose" (said Penguin, with indifference).—"Then, Sir, allow me to say, that, of all others, the ENGLISH have the least right to complain of Negro vices, passions, and irregularities. What! shall the violaters of what is sacred, decent, and becoming, dare to arraign the intemperance of those whose ignorance they ought to enlighten, and

and whose morals they ought to improve? Is a disregard to religious duties, and a dissoluteness of manners among superiors, to produce a contrary conduct in their slaves? How is it *possible*, Sir, to impress on the minds of the latter a favourable opinion of the honour, justice, or sincerity, of the former, when they see the most awful obligations neglected, and the most solemn duties cast aside? How, in the nature of things, inculcate moderation, or suppress passions, among the savage and the illiterate, who, as often as they look round, perceive such scandalous licentiousness daily practised by those whom they are instructed to reverence; nay, by the very person who wishes to impress them with ideas not only of his superior wisdom, but of his superior worth? Do they not see this white man of power single out the sable object of his desire, and *order* her to his bed? Do they not see this man of *equity* sometimes encroach on the property of another? And while the wife is snatched from the bosom of her husband,

and

and the bonds of conjugal affection are broken, do they not hear this man of *mercy and morality* denounce punishment to overcome reluctance, and profer rewards to lure her from the paths of decorum to those of vice and infidelity? Is not every trait of modesty undermined by the emissaries he employs for seduction? Is not every principle of delicacy eradicated by the rapacity of his inordinate pleasures? Does not another, and ~~another~~, and *another*, succeed to the station of infamy? nay, even after the favourite Sultana is chosen and admitted near the throne, is not the handkerchief occasionally dropt day after day in the Haram of his licentiousness, as a proof of the *stability of his own attachment*, and as an *example of moderation, fidelity, and faith to others*? Are *these* the methods, Monsieur Penguin, to reform and civilize the Negro mind to temperance? Are these the pictures to allure the ignorant and inconsiderate to the shrine of harmony, peace, and love? O! how I admire such subtle casuists, who argue so acutely against

gainst themselves ! How admirable their deductions ;—how beautiful their declamations, against vices of their own creation !”

You are an admirable painter, Madame Bellanger (said Penguin, whose countenance during this animated address had undergone several changes) ; you draw with a *glowing pencil*.”—“ Is the picture true or false” (said Madame Bellanger) ?—“ Rather overcharged in some parts (said Penguin) ; but, on the whole, perhaps tolerably just. But what would you have us do, Madame ? Are our managers, &c. to become Anchorites amidst surrounding temptations ? Or would you have them absolutely married to a Black or a Mulatto wench, merely to prove their *conjugal fidelity* ? Can you really seriously believe, that a greater attention to religious duties among the whites, would operate on the minds of those who hardly know the difference between a SUPREME BEING and an *Obi Man* ? Or does your zeal carry you so *very* far, as to conceive that a ge-

neral attention to decency, temperance, constancy, and affection, would ever prevail among such a set of devils as we daily see transgressing every regulation of order, and breaking through every method devised to establish good fellowship among them? The conduct of the whites I shall not attempt to defend; but irregular, and, if you will, *indecent*, as it may be, surely, Madame, after abstracting what is reprehensible, enough remains to afford examples to the blacks to act very differently with respect to harmony among themselves, and attention to their own welfare. What shall we say of a set of mortals who, in defiance of every inconvenience, and in spite of every punishment, will sacrifice and utterly destroy their own health and future comforts, merely for the gratification of a temporary enjoyment? Or how can we expect an adherence to the regular systems of polished society from those whose furious and unconquerable passions prompt them to deeds which, to every person unacquainted with facts, appear altogether impossible?

impossible? Will not a Negro slave, after performing the severe tasks of the day, travel ten, fifteen, nay, sometimes twenty miles, to visit a new mistress; partake of a favourite feast; or meet the object of his hatred and revenge? Will he not, in contempt of every obstacle, and in defiance of nature and necessity, continue to persevere in these habits of excess? Will he not, instead of allotting some portion of time to sleep or repose, remain the whole night devoted to intemperance and riot; and after travelling back his weary way, appear by day-break in the field to execute, with exhausted spirits, and a worn-out frame, the succeeding labours of the day? As to the *women*, if possible, they are worse. Examples of such depravity, and incorrigible debauchery, can hardly be instanced in the history of nations; nor is it easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than to make *one* Negro wench chaste, or commonly decent, in her conduct. Can passions so inordinate, or dispositions so prone to excess, originate in *slavery*? Is op-

pression the food of *licentiousness*? Is hard labour and subjection the cantharides to stimulate passions so unusual with man in similar situations? Where shall we find in the annals of mankind instances of unbounded gratification predominant in bondage? Where look for the fever of sensual enjoyment raging amidst exertions which exhaust the body and depress the mind? The NEGRO, however, stands alone as a monument of our astonishment, and an object of our commiseration; and repeated experience tells us, that if we mean to attend to *his* welfare and *our own safety*, we must be vigilant in watching his actions, and cautious in granting indulgences, which may ultimately lead to general ruin. This, in the eye of humanity, is painful; but you yourself have given us a melancholy proof of its *necessity*.”—“ I have also given you proofs of contrary effects proceeding from a contrary system” (said Madame Bellanger, with some warmth).—“ I must again repeat (said Penguin), that this solitary instance, from the utter
imprac-

impracticability of its being carried into general practice, is no proof at all.”—“It proves, however (said Madame Bellanger), that the *Negro*, with certain attentions and proper example, is *capable of improvement*; and that, I think, completely overturns your hypothesis.”—“In other words (said Penguin) it proves, that Negroes of a certain description, that is, all picked and chosen for the occasion, and placed in certain situations peculiarly favourable, *may*, in the course of fifteen years, be brought to a tolerable state of civilization. And even then, what is the *general* inference? If 30 Negroes of the best quality, and the most favourably situated, can, in the course of fifteen years (and, by your own account, with infinite labour), be reduced to order and good conduct, in what time will 300,000, of various vices, habits, and customs, be brought to the same condition?”

“YOUR arithmetical question (said Madame Bellanger, smiling) if not exactly in point,

Monfieur, is certainly in *character*. You have shifted your ground a little as a moralift; I fhall now endeavour to anfwer you as a *merchant*. The improvement of my Negroes was not effected by *time*, but by *circumftances*; without which, fifteen times fifteen years would not have done it. Thefe circumftances (independent of local fituation) I thought I had fully enumerated. That I may not be mifunderftood, and that I may finally clofe this fubject, I fhall take the liberty once more to bring them to your remembrance. I have faid, that the principal evil exifting in thefe iflands, in the prefent ftate of Negro bondage, is the want of POPULATION. I have likewife faid, that this can never be effectually remedied but by inftituting regular *marriage* among the flaves; that to eftablifh this on a proper and permanent bafis, impreffions of decency, decorum, and affection, muft firft be made on the Negro mind; and that the moft likely methods to accomplifh fo defirable a change are, firft, proper *examples among ourfelves*; and, fecondly,

ly, rewards and punishments invariably held out to wean the Negro from habits of irregularity, and to make him enamoured of domestic peace and the blessings of society. What these *examples* ought to be, and what they have already produced on this property, I have already particularly mentioned; and it rests with you and your countrymen, first to adopt and try similar methods, before you pronounce similar effects *impossible*.

“ BUT as the first step towards a reform, in both morals and manners (said Madame Belanger, with solemnity), let some attention, Monsieur, be paid to the *first cause* of all human excellence or improvement.—*Let your worthless and disorderly clergy be banished from your islands, and a more virtuous and exemplary set of pastors introduced in their room.*—Let temporary places of public worship be established in different parts of the country, that the Negroes, from each estate, may, once a-week, conveniently convene, and, for

an hour, decently attend divine service.—Let your managers, overseers, and different white persons, on your properties, exchange a dissoluteness of manners, for one more calculated to impress a sense of delicacy and decorum on the minds of the slaves, and exhibit a picture more likely to fix an opinion of their superior excellence.—Let every method be tried to reward conjugal and parental affection; and every expedient be adopted to check irregularity between the sexes.—Lastly, to meliorate a condition which, we must all admit, is too severe, and as one of the principal steps towards an increased population, let every indulgence be granted consistent with safety, and every exemption introduced consistent with subordination.”—“ And this, you think, *will do*” (said Penguin, carelessly).—“ I think it will do a *great deal* at least, Monsieur (said Madame Bellanger), and that surely is not to be overlooked. To humanize the Negro mind, however little, or to effectuate any change in his condition, however small, that may ultimately
tend

tend to their additional happiness, and our future advantage, is unquestionably accomplishing a great end. If nothing more were done than an increased population, would not that alone be a wonderful benefit? While we yearly added multitudes of better subjects to our own possessions, would we not of course preclude the introduction of multitudes of the miserable annually among us; and, perhaps, at last be enabled to shut the door of mercy against a traffic, shocking to a humane, and repugnant to a dignified mind." Penguin shook his head. "Admitting, Monsieur, that this last hope is visionary, and that no such happy event ever can be brought about, is it not doing something, during the existence of evil, to lessen the calamity? Since the passions of the native African are so ungovernable, his manners so savage, and his dispositions so bad, is not every method to diminish the number of those plagues among us to be adopted; and is not every attempt to produce a more orderly and polished race in their stead to be applauded?"

ed?"—"But are you sure (interrupted Penguin), that this new progeny will be superior to the African? Is the *Creole*, at this moment, less vicious, or less prone to excess?—is he not equally treacherous, stubborn, irascible, cruel, and revengeful?—and is not his superior experience productive of a superior cunning and address, which render his conduct less liable to detection, and consequently much more to be dreaded?"—"You must, at least, allow (said Madame), that he is much better *prepared* for civilization than the other; and surely that is one material step towards *general improvement*. I mean not to assert, that every thing is to be brought about at once, or that new plans are to be introduced precipitately. Great caution and great prudence, certainly, are necessary, and many years must elapse before a *general reformation* can be expected."—"Centuries, I presume you mean" (said Penguin).—"Well! be it so (said Madame Bellanger); better that centuries should be employed in establishing

establishing a gradual reform, than roll past in total vice, ignorance, and misery."

THUS ended an argument, not badly supported on either side, by two persons who, although very different in sentiments and dispositions, possessed each great experience, and no contemptible share of abilities. It ended, however, like most other arguments; without carrying conviction home to either party. Penguin, unwilling to push matters farther, took Madame Bellanger by the hand, and said, "Madame Bellanger, I believe you are as good a woman as ever lived; but, with all your virtues and *experience*, you are yet to learn a little more of the *Negro character*"—" *Et vous, Monsieur* (said Madame Bellanger, tapping him on the shoulder), with all your superior acuteness and penetration, would not be a bit the worse for a little more — HUMANITY."

I HAD now been at *La Cache* near three weeks;

weeks; and, in consequence of the salubrity and coolness of the mountain air, had effectually recovered my former health and vigour. At the earnest entreaty, however, of Madame Bellanger, Penguin (who departed next morning) agreed to my remaining eight days longer. During this short interval, I was engaged in an employment which yielded me peculiar delight, and for the first time in my life illustrated the sweets annexed to literary composition during a pause in business, or a blank in mental amusement. The history of Madame Bellanger's singular life could not fail to leave impressions on a young mind, alive to the emotions of pity, and susceptible of tenderness and love. I had therefore, partly to amuse, and partly to improve, myself in the French language, conceived an ardent desire to commit Madame Bellanger's story to writing as nearly in her own words as possible; and as the good woman took an interest in every thing I did, I made no secret of my labours, but submitted them daily to her perusal for her correction
and

and amendment. I had nearly completed my narrative, when one evening Mrs Penguin, observing Madame Bellanger and her daughter engaged in some necessary domestic concerns, proposed a walk till supper-time. As her husband was expected the next day, our conversation naturally turned on our approaching departure from La CACHE, and the agreeable society we were about to lose for a considerable time; which as naturally produced a mutual pensiveness that neither of us could shake off. We had seated ourselves for coolness on the bank of the stream at the bottom of our favourite plantain walk; and Mrs Penguin having enquired how far I had proceeded in my narrative, I pulled the manuscript out of my pocket, and shewed her. “Read (said she) the part that relates the misfortune and death of the Count de V———. I was sensibly affected with Madame Bellanger’s relation; I would fain see how you have described it.” I willingly complied; and as I proceeded, the vanity of a young author was highly

Y

gratified

gratified in perceiving Mrs Penguin's compassionate sorrows pay so liberal a tribute to descriptive calamity. She had at the commencement, from an eagerness of attention, drawn close to me; and, in the act of looking over what I had written, had naturally, and I am sure inadvertently, reclined upon me, with her right hand resting on my right shoulder. When I came to that part of the narrative where the expiring father takes leave of his wife and daughter, Mrs Penguin's hand dropped with a convulsive and sudden motion to the ground. This change, which withdrew a partial support to her former position, occasioned her face to come close to mine; and while her head rested on my left shoulder, I had, from an apprehension of her falling, insensibly put my arm round her waist to support her. How long we had remained thus, I know not; but a rustling noise behind us induced me to look around, when, to my no small surprise and confusion, I perceived Penguin and Mademoiselle Antoinnette within a few yards of us.





